

**Relational Aggression, Antisocial Behaviour, and Psychopathy in Canadian Female
Offenders**

by

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Abstract

Interest in the expression of female aggression, antisocial behaviour, and psychopathy has grown in recent years as a result of steadily increasing incarceration rates of women in Canada (38.6% over the past 10 years). Previous research suggests that the relational nature of female aggression, in offender and non-offender samples, differentiates women from their male counterparts. Whereas males tend to be physically aggressive, relational aggression is the most common form of aggression employed by women, is associated with psychopathic traits, and has been found to predict criminal activity. As research pertaining to these factors in adult female offenders is in its infancy, it is imperative that the role of relational aggression in incarcerated women, both violent and non-violent, be further explored. To this end, a mixed method design was implemented, including 56 female offenders recruited from three correctional facilities in Ontario, Canada. All participants completed a series of questionnaires measuring relational aggression, antisocial behaviour, and psychopathy. Sixteen participants also participated in semi-structured interviews querying their lived experiences of relational aggression in a custodial setting. All participants, regardless of being identified as violent or non-violent offenders, disclosed experiencing victimization by way of relational aggression while serving their sentence and the majority acknowledged acting as perpetrators. Emerging from the results was a five-stage descriptive model detailing the process through which dominant female inmates employ relationally aggressive tactics (e.g., gossiping/rumour spreading, guilt induction, malicious humour, social exclusion, and social manipulation) to establish and maintain social hierarchies on their respective units. The presence of several psychopathic traits also emerged that prove useful in social hierarchy development; more specifically, both violent and non-violent women exhibited a certain level of machiavellianism, callousness, social influence, rebelliousness, and

impulsivity. Callousness, specifically, was found to significantly predict relational aggression perpetration in those who also have more substantial histories of victimization by way of the same relationally aggressive tactics. Additional results pertaining to female antisocial behaviour and the observed psychopathic traits in the current sample are reported. Recommendations for future research, training, and assessment are proposed.

Keywords

Female offenders, relational aggression, antisocial behaviour, psychopathy, descriptive model of social hierarchy development, mixed methods, Canada, callousness, machiavellianism, violent offenders, incarceration, treatment, assessment, and training.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Female criminal offence behaviours have become a frequent topic of discussion across various disciplines including psychology, criminology, and feminism (Maguire, Morgan, & Reiner, 2007; Zakaria, Allenby, Derkzen, & Jones, 2013). Researchers who have studied female correctional populations have independently examined offence behaviours (Salisbury, 2015), aggression and antisociality (McAndrew, 2014), and psychopathic traits/behaviours (Verona, Bresin, & Patrick, 2013; Walters, 2012). A critical review conducted by Hannah-Moffat (2010) emphasized the relational nature of female aggression within a custodial setting and the necessity of forming a gender-responsive approach to the management of women in the Canadian penal system to ensure rehabilitation is possible. An increased awareness of female experiences and manifestations of female offence behaviours is required to accomplish this goal (Nuytiens & Christianens, 2016).

Specific experiences have been implicated as precursors to criminal activity. Previous victimization (i.e., physical, emotional, and/or sexual abuse), severe emotion regulation difficulties, and disrupted interpersonal relationships (i.e. parental, intimate, and peer) have been identified as prominent risk factors for females (Block, Blokland, van der Werff, van Os, & Nieuwbeerta, 2010; Cauffman, 2008, Daly, 1994; Rivera-Maestre, 2010). Amongst these factors is relational aggression, which has also been identified as a predictor and facilitator of future criminal activity (Moretti & Odgers, 2002). Consequently, relational aggression has been identified as a necessary area of inquiry (Moretti, Holland, & McKay, 2001; Rivera-Maestre, 2010). Relational aggression is considered the most prevalent form of aggression employed by females in community samples, whereas physical aggression occurs less often (White, Gordon, & Guerra, 2015).

To effectively understand female offence behaviours, antisociality, and psychopathy, it is imperative that the role of relational aggression be investigated. Therefore, the current study examined the role and use of relational aggression within and between violent and non-violent female offenders to expand the growing body of literature pertaining to relational aggression in adult female offenders, and gender-specific manifestations of antisociality and psychopathy. Additionally, a systematic inquiry into the individual experiences of female offenders, as it pertains to aggression and interpersonal relationships, within and outside of correctional facilities, provides a lens through which to interpret and understand Canadian female offenders. The high value of interpersonal relationships in the lives and well being of women (Miller, 1976) and the potential risks women may pose to others (e.g., psychosocial damage to their peers; Herrenkohl et al., 2007) provides a context by which to address the current study's objectives.

Current Climate of Female Offending in Canada

Prevalence Rates. The number of incarcerated women has been steadily increasing since 1980 (Covington, 1998a), in Canada, the United States, and abroad (Liddell & Martinovic, 2013). In late 2015, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) released its most recent Corrections and Conditional Release Statistical Overview using data obtained between 2013 and 2014. The report indicates that, over the past 10 years, the rate of adult female offenders admitted to the federal correctional system increased by 38.6%, from 236 (2004-05) to 327 (2013-14) inmates. At the onset of the reported increase, researchers postulated several reasons for said increase, including a greater willingness on the part of the justice system to incarcerate women, a decrease in tolerance of violent offences, and changes in stress levels of women due to changes in occupational demands, parenting practices, and intimate relationship patterns (e.g., divorce; Bala, 1994; Chunn & Gavigan, 1991; Thomas, 1993). In 2013-14, 57.7% of

incarcerated women were serving time for a violent offence; which included 4.5% serving a sentence for murder, 122 serving life/indeterminate sentences, and four having been assigned Dangerous Offender Status (i.e., deemed a significant threat to the life, safety, and well-being of society; section 753 of the Criminal Code of Canada).

Consistent with prior reports Aboriginal women continue to be over-represented in the correctional system (e.g., Statistics Canada, 2011). At the time of the report, there had been an 89.6% increase in Aboriginal women admitted over the past 10 years, representing 34.5% of all female offenders in custody. It is likely that the increase in Aboriginal offenders is consistent with an overall increase in female offenders. Approximately 75% of these women were serving a sentence for a violent offence compared to 50.2% of non-aboriginal women. The number of women in custody or under supervision in the United States correctional system has also increased. Maruschak and Bonczar (2013) reported an influx of female offenders entering correctional facilities compared to male offender rates, which have declined. In 2012, approximately 94,000 women were on parole and nearly 100,000 on probation. It should be noted that although there has been a drastic increase in female incarceration rates, women still represent only 6% of all offenders in custody (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Offence Type. Recent offence data, published by Statistics Canada in 2015, lists common or simple assaults (i.e., intentional non-consensual application or threat of force; Section 265 of the Canadian Criminal Code, 1985), Theft Under \$5,000, and administrative violations (e.g., breach of probation or failure to appear in court) as the most frequent offences committed by women. Regarding victims of female offenders, nearly half (46%) were intimate partners or spouses of the offender. Generally, female offenders are less likely to be deemed guilty by the courts (differs by province), were less likely to spend time in custody, and were

typically given shorter sentences, regardless of age (Mahony, 2011). It is suspected that women often evade guilty verdicts because they are less likely to have concurrent charges (Mahony, 2011).

Profile. Mahony (2011) reported a preliminary profile of the incarcerated female based on offender demographics obtained from the Correctional Service of Canada statistics. Female offenders at the provincial and federal level were generally younger, undereducated (i.e., lacking a high school diploma), single, and lacked employment prior to their incarceration (Mahony, 2011). Regarding age, 56% of provincially incarcerated women and 53% of federally incarcerated women were between the ages of 18-35. Female offenders are also more likely to be labelled as “high-risk” (i.e., more likely to reoffend or receive misconducts) and “high-need” (i.e., requiring psychological interventions and physical supports) (Statistics Canada, 2011). Feminist researchers suggest perhaps it is androcentric risk/needs assessment tools that account for a greater proportion of females being classified as high risk and need (Salisbury, Van Voorhis, & Spiropoulos, 2009; Zakaria et al., 2013). In addition to the above difficulties, federal female offenders also exhibited personal and emotional problems (82%) and deficits in social interactions (74%; Mahony, 2011).

To address these needs, specific programs were requested by incarcerated women in the provincial system, namely substance abuse relapse prevention programs (94%), employment training (81%), and community engagement skills for improved community functioning (79%). It should be noted that the most recent report detailing the above features of Canadian female offenders was published in 2011 and includes data gathered in 2008/2009; however, periodical reports and recent studies reporting female offender demographics have replicated this profile (e.g., Snyder, 2011; Statistics Canada, 2012).

Gender Difference. Gender differences between incarceration rates, offence types, and sentencing are apparent in all statistical reports to date (see Statistics Canada, 2015); however, it is the qualitative, experiential, and historical (i.e., early childhood environment) differences that have drawn the recent attention of researchers, clinicians, and policy-makers, alike (Belknap, 2010; Cauffman, Monahan, & Thomas, 2015). Based on previous research, differential offending pathways have been identified. Issues related to relationships (e.g., friends and partners) and personal perception (i.e., self-esteem), mental health (e.g., depression), histories of victimization, early attachment ruptures (i.e., with parents), and pronounced anger/hostility have been noted; all of which increase a woman's risk of engaging in criminal behaviour or recidivating (Chesney-Lind & Sheldon, 2004; Van Voorhis, 2012).

Giordano and Rockwell (2000) assert that it takes a significantly greater environmental "push" (p. 22) for females to engage in criminal and violent activity. These women must be immersed in criminal lifestyles (e.g., family members and peers) to become engaged (Giordano & Rockwell, 2000). It is also well established that compounded trauma experiences play a significant role in the offending cycles of women (Covington, 1998b). Although trauma exists in the histories of many male offenders, evidence of the negative impacts of compounded trauma is more salient in women (Benda, 2005). Women also face more economic hardships and barriers to employment. These potentially lead to criminal alternatives so they can meet their basic personal needs, and, in some cases, the needs of their children (Benda, 2005). A recent review of risk assessment articles identified three risk factors unique to women: 1) early pregnancy (i.e., during adolescents), 2) prostitution, and 3) self-harm (Geraghty & Woodhams, 2015).

Despite gender differences between male and female pathways to offending, consistent demographic features were observed. The majority of offenders came from low-income areas/families and were often raised in punitive and harsh parenting environments. As adults, they are under educated, under employed (or lack employment all together), and are disproportionately members of a minority group (e.g., of Aboriginal descent; Miller, Loeber, & Hipwell, 2009; Steffensmeier & Allan, 1996).

Female Offence Behaviours

Models of Offending. A systematic description of female offending, developed by Murdoch, Vess, and Ward (2012), entitled the “Descriptive Model of Female Offending (DMFO)” explores the confluence of psychological, social, emotional and contextual factors in female offending and aggressive behaviour. The model also includes distal (e.g., history of abuse) and proximal (e.g., current life stressors) factors that predispose and contribute to the use of violence by female offenders, specifically when used to achieve economic, protective, or interpersonal goals. Collectively, this model is an offence process that labels female violence as driven by issues with emotion-regulation and problematic problem solving strategies in the face of negative emotions; moderated by consistent negative mood, polysubstance abuse, deviant and antisocial peer and intimate relationships, and overall life dissatisfaction (Murdoch et al., 2012). In addition, this theory implies that there are specific life features that underlie violent offences, including early abuse and repeated exposure to violence (so much so that it becomes normalized), family dysfunction, and subsequent issues with emotional and behavioural regulation (Murdoch et al., 2012). Of particular importance is the overarching theme of female violence as being goal-directed (i.e., purposeful use of aggression to attain a desired goal) (Murdoch et al., 2012).

The theory contains four phases but only Phase 1 and 2 are relevant to the current investigation. Phase 1 of this model encompasses background factors that have occurred in the offender's past likely to increase the chance of violent offending and predispose an individual to criminal/antisocial behaviours. Details regarding the psychosocial background of female offenders will be addressed in detail in subsequent sections. Phase 2 relates to the interaction between offender and victim, which activate appraisals, accurate or otherwise, of the situation, often producing negative affective experiences. Activation may be sudden or gradual, eventually stimulating a negative affective response that cannot be regulated by the perpetrator. In some cases, the offender's dysregulated emotional response may result in an aggressive or violent outburst. For example, a woman may verbally or physically attack other women because she perceives their behaviour as being disrespectful. Alternatively, one woman may feel she has been exploited by another for a prolonged period of time and finally responds violently to a new provocation.

Simultaneously, offence supported cognitions are generated (e.g., victim blaming) to justify or rationalize the offence. Imbedded within distorted cognitions are beliefs of powerlessness and defensiveness, often born from exposure to severe trauma and extensive victimization histories. Powerlessness embodies a reactive aggressive stance whereby the fear of loss of material, person, or relationships evokes aggressive and violent reactions. Defensiveness can result in violent acts when the offender feels the victim has been disloyal or is purposefully provoking them.

Violent Female Offending. As noted above, over half (i.e., 57.7%) of female offenders are serving time for a violent offence, primarily assaults. Kubiak, Kim, Fedock, and Bybee (2013) qualitatively examined the prevalence of violent behaviour in women offenders. In a

random sample of 543 female participants, 45% disclosed engaging in violent behaviour 12 months prior to their current incarceration, for which they were not reported to police or charged. Additionally, of the 61% of violent offenders in the sample, 35% were also victims of physical assaults. Byrd and Davis (2009), as well as Kubiak et al. (2013), have indicated female offenders are both perpetrators and victims.

The findings yielded three violent offence types based on perpetration frequency: a) uncaught (i.e., acted violently in 12 months prior to incarceration who were not convicted of such), b) isolated (i.e., women who committed single violent offence), and c) patterned (i.e., convicted of a violent offence + engaged in violent offending 12 months prior to incarceration; Kubiak et al., 2013). Women classified as uncaught and patterned were characterized as having higher rates of mental health issues, histories of substance abuse, previous involvement in the correctional system, problematic personality features (i.e., impulsivity, disinhibition, and anger), as well as high criminogenic risk. Conversely, isolated offenders (i.e., one time violent offenders) are less likely to exhibit these features and often commit more extreme offences. In a study of 186 incarcerated women, one-time violent offenders were typically over-controlled (i.e., having a rigid behavioural and emotional regulation style), having reacted aggressively to provocation by a known other (e.g., family members) or in response to domestic abuse. Alternatively, repeat offenders frequently engage in aggressive behaviours, reacting impulsively to the actions of others (Kruttschnitt, 2002; Verona & Carbonell, 2000).

Psychological Profile. Diagnostically, female offenders demonstrate behaviours, cognitions, and affectivity congruent with various personality disorders. Most relevant to the current investigation is the association between female offenders and Antisocial Personality Disorder (APD) (Werner, Few, & Bucholz, 2015). APD is characterized by a disregard for the

feelings and rights of others, beginning in early adolescence (i.e., 15 years), and involves impulsivity, deceitfulness, engagement in unlawful behaviour, irritability and/or aggressiveness, irresponsible behaviour, and a lack of remorse (APA; American Psychological Association, 2013). Prevalence rates of APD, although low in the general population (i.e., approximately 0.2%-3.3%; APA, 2013), are much higher in offender samples, ranging between 50-80% (Edens, Kelley, Lilienfeld, Skeem, & Douglas, 2015). Of incarcerated women, approximately 21%-53% meet criteria for APD (Fazel & Danesh, 2002; Warren et al., 2002), depending on the study. APD is strongly associated with aggression (Stucke & Sporer, 2002), primarily proactive aggression (i.e., planned aggression executed for personal gain; Lobbestael, Cima, & Lemmens, 2015), as well as increases in violent behaviour (Putkonen, Komulainen, Virkkunen, Eronen, & Lönnqvist, 2003). Previous research suggests that women with APD exhibit greater symptom severity in comorbid disorders (e.g., substance abuse, mood and anxiety disorders, or other personality disorders) as compared to men, ultimately having a negative impact on treatment outcomes (Galen, Brower, Gillespie, & Zucker, 2000). Closely linked to APD, is psychopathy (Werner et al., 2015), whereby psychopathy is highly comorbid with APD in offender populations (Hare, 2003), sharing important correlates (e.g., substance abuse; Messina, Wish, Hoffman, & Nemes, 2001) and characterological features (e.g., deceitfulness and manipulation; Coid & Ullrich, 2010). Both APD and psychopathy are related to varied forms of aggressive behaviour (i.e., physical and relational; see below).

Relational Aggression

The General Aggression Model (GAM) defines aggression as intentionally harming another individual (DeWall, Anderson & Bushman, 2011). Perpetrators of aggressive actions perform these behaviours believing that said actions would in fact hurt the target; accidental

harm is not considered aggression (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). According to the GAM, in order to properly understand aggression, it must be examined from various viewpoints; specifically, by acknowledging and examining overt and covert forms.

Overt Versus Covert Aggression. Overt aggression is defined by Crick, Casa, and Mosher (1997) as actual physical harm or threat of physical harm to another and is characterized by direct confrontations. Research has focused primarily on overt types of aggression, involving violent and physically damaging acts such as hitting, kicking, or threats of violence toward another person (Prinstein, Boergers & Vernberg, 2001); however, these actions typically involved male perpetrators (Archer, 2004; Crick & Nelson, 2002; Leenaars & Lester, 2011; Tomada & Schneider, 1997). Conversely, covert aggression is more often associated with female perpetrators. Covert aggression infers the aggressor attempts to conceal or disguise aggressive actions or intentions to avoid social persecution or negative perceptions (Fink, 2009). Virtually unexplored until the early 1990's, Crick and Grotpeter (1995) delved into the intricacies of relational aggression (Crain, Finch, & Foster, 2005; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick et al., 2002; Daniels, Quigley, Menard & Spence, 2010; Gomes, 2007). Crick and Grotpeter (1995) found that males are more aggressive than females; however, when covert forms were taken into account, males and females displayed nearly equal rates of aggression. These results provide evidence of differential presentations of aggression in females and have substantiated the importance of investigating covert aggression.

Research thus far has determined that covert forms of aggression may be more prevalent and damaging than was previously assumed (see section related to psychosocial adjustment) (Crick, Bigbee & Howes, 1996; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Mathieson et al., 2011; Murray-Close, Ostrov, & Crick, 2007; Prinstein et al., 2001). Rather than portraying girls and women as non-

aggressive, many researchers now acknowledge its presence in women (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Moroschan, Hurd, & Nicoladis, 2009). It has been argued that failing to account for covert aggression demonstrates a bias towards predominantly male expression of anger, leading to gaps in our understanding of female experiences of aggression (Forrest, Eatough, Shevlin, 2005).

Relational Aggression Defined. Covert aggression has been defined in various ways including relational aggression (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995), social aggression, relational bullying, and indirect aggression (Forrest et al., 2005). For the purpose of this investigation, the term relational aggression was employed. Crick and Grotpeter (1995) defined relational aggression as behaviours that harm others through damage (or threat of damage) to relationships or feelings of acceptance, friendship, or group inclusion (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Typically associated behaviours include social exclusion, gossiping, rumour spreading, or damaging someone's reputation. These behaviours can be direct (e.g., telling someone that they are not allowed to hang out with a previously established group) or indirect (e.g., starting a rumour). Furthermore, relationally aggressive behaviours can be "pure" (i.e., deliberate), reactive (i.e., evoked by anger), and/or proactive/instrumental (i.e., used to attain desired thing/goal; Goldweber & Cauffman, 2012).

The most common perpetrators of relational aggression are close friends or individuals within the same social group as the victim (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Relational aggression can exist between friends, family, and often occurs within intimate partner relations. It also occurs within both male and female friend dyads. Relational aggression usually translates to various social settings for girls/women (e.g., school and work) and appears to be relatively stable across childhood and adolescence (Ostrov & Keating, 2004; Vaillancourt, Brendgen, Boivin, & Tremblay, 2003). Until recently, relational aggression was studied most often in children and

adolescents; however, it is now being investigated in college and adult populations (Hess & Hagen, 2006; Loudin, Loukas & Robinson, 2003; Ostrov, Hart, Kamper, & Godleski, 2011; Vaillancourt & Sunderani, 2011), and recently in offender samples (e.g., Allison & Ireland, 2010).

Relational Aggression as a Response to Socialization. Social norms have been identified as being at the core of female aggressive behaviour and dictate women's expressions and experiences of anger (Cross & Campbell, 2011; McAndrew, 2014). In fact, women are rarely encouraged to display anger at all, often leading to harmful emotion suppression (Giordano & Rockwell, 2000). Lacking appropriate regulation skills and coping strategies to manage anger, women may respond with aggressive outbursts or covertly aggressive methods as a means of anger expression.

Relational Theory, originally developed by Miller (1976), is built on the premise that women are differentially socialized compared to males, whereby greater emphasis is placed on interpersonal relationships (Miller, 1976). Miller hypothesized women's self-esteem comes from engagement in successful connections with others. Bylington (1997) added that women are motivated to add to their early social systems (i.e., mothers and immediate family members) rather than individuate from them, laying the foundation for substantial reliance on relationships as a measure of self-worth. Based on the importance of social relationships, attachment ruptures (i.e., with parents), or separation from a valued other (e.g., close friend) will likely be detrimental to the woman's future social and emotional adjustment (Covington, 2007).

Relational Theory acknowledges the positive benefits of healthy interpersonal relationships (e.g., aid in healthy emotion regulation; Kaplan, 1984; Pollack, 2007) but emphasizes that such high investment in interpersonal relationships as regulator can lead women

to pathologize each other's behaviour, resulting in strife and discord between them.

Furthermore, the impact of relationships on identity development also put women at risk of being attacked and harmed via these relationships intentionally or unintentionally (Odgers & Moretti, 2002). By way of example, women may submit to exploitive and abusive situations and/or relationships as they attempt to attain and maintain platonic and/or romantic relationships (Odgers & Moretti, 2002). The aforementioned exposure also makes vulnerable women susceptible to the development of antisocial and aggressive behaviour (Moffitt, Caspi, Rutter, & Silva, 2001). Therefore, criminal activities and thinking may be reinforced if valued by members of these volatile relationships. In the prison system, failed interpersonal and attachment relationships are often replayed, reinforcing and provoking feelings of disconnection.

Trammell (2009) presented three major themes or "arguments" regarding relational aggression/violence and socialization in female offenders: a) aggressors used relational aggression because of the obvious importance the women place on social relationships, b) relational aggression/violence as a product of socialization is deemed more appropriate than physical violence, and c) competition between women is a motivating factor for relational aggression/violence perpetration, particularly as it relates to attention paid by male prison staff (pattern observed outside correctional facilities). Feminist research indicates women utilize different, stereotypically "female" offence tactics when committing criminal acts (Miller, 2000). By activating stereotypes that women are weak and can be easily taken advantage of, manipulation and intimidation tactics are implemented (Miller, 2000). Aggressive females may engage in covert, socially aggressive tactics in order to adhere to socially acceptable "female" behaviours. Furthermore, it can be postulated that engaging in relationally aggressive behaviour has become the "go to" behavioural framework when dealing with other females.

Preferred Use of Relational Aggression in Women. Several reasons as to why women prefer relational aggression to physical have been proposed. Crick and Grotpeter (1995) posit relational aggression is employed because it damages the goals that are most valued by females (i.e., interpersonal relationships). Therefore, perpetrators with the goal of harming others often target the relationships and social networks of their victims. In the opinion of Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, and Kaukiainen (1992), relational aggression may be more effective than physical attacks given the close, smaller social group organizations found in women. By way of extension, smaller social units allow access to personal information, making perpetrators privy to knowledge of the social, emotional, or societal vulnerabilities of their victims (McAndrew, 2014). Intimate access and knowledge is less common in larger, less enmeshed social circles (Bjorkqvist et al., 1992), such as those often observed amongst males.

Finally, it appears there is a lower social cost, as a residual effect of lower detection rates, of relationally aggressive behaviours compared to physical (Bjorkqvist et al., 1992). A longitudinal study conducted by Xie, Cairns, and Cairns (2002) found that in 22% of relationally aggressive confrontations, a secondary perpetrator (i.e., encouraged by the primary to get involved) was more likely to interact directly with victim. More surprising was the inability of the victim to identify who acted as the primary perpetrator. Within a correctional setting, relationally aggressive behaviours are clearly opportune as they are unlikely to result in institutional misconducts (Cross & Campbell, 2011) and cannot be prosecuted unless labelled as slander by the justice system (Burt, Donnellan, & Tackett, 2012). Wulf-Ludden (2016) attributed low misconduct rates to women's use of covert strategies that are not observable and do not result in physical harm or property damage; relational aggression shares these attributes and proves a viable method of perpetration.

Motivations for Relational Aggression. Pronk and Zimmer-Beck (2010) identified maintaining or increasing one's social status as the primary motive for relational aggression. Social dominance and popularity were identified as benefits of engaging in relationally aggressive behaviours towards peers. Victim characteristics are also used to rationalize relationally aggressive behaviour; victims were targeted due to their emotional presentation (e.g., viewed as too emotional), social appeal (e.g., being a "nerd"), and, in some cases, enviable attributes that threatened the aggressor (e.g., being academically inclined). Although relational aggression appears to be quite externally motivated, internal motivations were also reported. Aggressors describe perpetrating to compensate for negative emotional states or to increase their self-esteem (Pronk & Zimmer-Beck, 2010). Vacillating mood, jealousy, boredom, and compensating for perceived friendship insecurity was also noted.

Based on the aforementioned study, Pronk and Zimmer-Beck (2010) described relational aggression as a means to alter and control their social environment, meet their own needs and goals, and to achieve social dominance. Typically, relationally aggressive individuals can achieve social status by excluding or isolating, devaluing, and controlling peers, in most cases positioning themselves in superior roles above others (Card, Hodges, Little, & Hawley, 2005). Relational aggression can also be used to align or affiliate oneself with peers or groups that provide benefits to the individual (Roland, 2002). By way of example, the individual may be granted the opportunity to take part in more desired social events (e.g., invited to parties) or gain attention or affection to meet emotional needs (e.g., from potential mates/partners). Hawley (2003) called individuals who utilized strategic social positioning, often perceived as prosocial, "Machiavellian" (p. 298). It is due to these attributes that relationally aggressive behaviour may appear prosocial, providing additional support for relational aggression as an opportune strategy.

Relational Aggression in Incarcerated Women. The majority of research examining interpersonal relationships among incarcerated women focus primarily on positive outcomes associated with the development of interpersonal relationships, often reporting supportive exchanges and prosocial behaviours in dyads or groups (Wulf-Ladden, 2013). However, negative interpersonal relationships have also been observed. Crump (1995) reported that incarceration settings compound women's experiences of victimization and competition, a noted precursor to relational aggression. Within this environment, coercion, manipulation, and mistrust are common, with an overarching struggle for power and control. In qualitative interviews, 35 incarcerated female offenders disclosed conscious avoidance of prison-relationships, both platonic and romantic, because they viewed other inmates as being manipulative, self-serving, deceitful, and superficial (Greer, 2000). Additionally, female offenders generally label inmate friendships as being inherently manipulative and disingenuous, regardless of the individual attempting to establish the relationship (Collica, 2013).

Trammell (2009) indicated that although adult female inmates disclosed violence in the institution, they emphasized the presence and associated negative impacts of socially motivated aggression (i.e., extreme emotional harm). Specifically, they noted gossiping and rumour spreading as being used to damage relationships and/or excommunicate unwanted peers or individuals who had violated group rules (e.g., affiliating with unsanctioned inmates). A recent study by Trammell, Wulf-Ladden, and Mowder (2015) also emphasized the presence of intimate partner violence between incarcerated female offenders, a topic beyond the scope of this investigation.

To alleviate the restrictive social and emotional environment of prisons, female inmates often form pseudofamilies to compensate for the original social supports they lack (Wulf-Ludden, 2016). The first researcher to fully investigate and conceptualize pseudofamilies was Rose Giallombardo in 1966. She described pseudofamilies as a social organization reminiscent of traditional kinship structures. By way of example, an inmate may take on the role of mother, daughter, or sister. Pseudofamilies are developed as a support system among inmates in response to the socially and emotionally deprived environment in which they find themselves (Severence, 2005). Although deemed primarily positive, often encouraging inmate involvement in programming and facilitate feelings of security, emotional support, and affection amongst members (e.g., Clone & DeHart, 2014; Wulf-Ludden, 2016), some findings reveal negative outcomes. Specifically, incarcerated women who identify as being a part of a pseudofamily reported increased levels of anger/aggression, anger regulation, and frequently describe their “families” as manipulative or exploitive (Loper & Gildea, 2004), consistent with definitions of relational aggression.

Since relational aggression has come to the forefront of research, more focus has been placed on females and antisocial behaviour (Odgers & Moretti, 2002). Qualitative research has depicted the social relationships of violent females as preoccupied with power and dominance, which is intended to secure their superior position in the group. They maintain power through strict control of their social sphere and through strategic manipulation of its members; if challenged or provoked, they might respond with physical aggression and violent reprisals (Wulf-Ludden, 2013). Contrary to the rates of physical aggression and violence in female facilities is the presence of interpersonal aggression, reported by juvenile and adult offenders alike. To date, there exists a small yet growing body of literature examining social and relational

aggression in correctional settings (e.g., Goldweber & Cauffman, 2010; Taylor & Borduin, 2014; Trammell, 2009). Although the majority of research has been conducted with juvenile female offenders, recognition of relational aggression in correctional facilities, its effect on institutional dynamics and misconducts, and the negative impact of relational aggression on the psychological well being of adult inmates is gaining momentum in the research community (e.g., Taylor & Borduin, 2014; Wulf-Ludden, 2013).

Psychosocial Impacts of Relational Aggression. Relational aggression is associated with psychological and social maladjustment. Herrenkohl et al. (2007) addressed particular risk factors associated with relational aggression victimization, as well as common characteristics of relationally aggressive individuals in a sample of 1,942 7th to 9th graders. The authors found that 55% of female participants self-reported being relationally aggressive, demonstrating fewer risk factors than those who were physically aggressive. However, relationally aggressive individuals exhibited more risk factors than non-aggressive individuals (i.e., those who reported no physical or relational aggression; Herrenkohl et al., 2007). Major risk factors for the use of relational aggression were peer influence (e.g., involvement in gangs, those who use drugs and interaction with antisocial individuals), youth characteristics (e.g., favourable attitudes toward antisocial behaviour), and dysfunctional family histories. Previous research also indicates that early experiences of peer rejection (i.e., at ages 4-6) negatively impact children and promote oppositional and delinquent behaviour in later years (Cowan & Cowan, 2004).

Perpetrators/Perpetrator-Victims. Prinstein and colleagues (2001) examined the psychosocial adjustment of those who engage in relational or physically aggressive behaviours. Overall, they found that adolescents' aggression towards peers was linked with greater externalizing symptoms. Externalizing symptoms are classified as disruptive behaviour

disorders and share behavioural features with Conduct Disorder and Oppositional Defiant Disorder (Witkiewitz et al., 2013). Interestingly, these findings suggest that being a perpetrator of relational aggression coincides with disruptive behaviour disorders in girls, but not in boys. Werner and Crick (1999) obtained results consistent with Witkiewitz and colleagues (2013), finding that experiencing peer rejection and having negative interpersonal relationships, displaying antisocial behaviour, engaging in self-injury or bulimic behaviours, and reporting lower levels of life satisfaction were positively correlated with relational aggression perpetration. Perpetrators of relational aggression also harbour certain characteristics indicative of various psychological disorders. Savage (2008) found that children who were extremely and exclusively relationally aggressive disclosed more qualities and behaviours consistent with DSM-IV disorders, namely Conduct Disorder (20%) and Oppositional Defiant Disorder (60%), as well as Cluster B personality disorders, most relevant being Antisocial Personality Disorder (Cluster B) and Borderline Personality Disorder (Cluster B).

As indicated previously research indicates that early experiences of peer rejection has been linked to oppositional and delinquent behaviour (Cowan & Cowan, 2004) during childhood and later in life. Werner and Crick (1999) noted that, in many cases, it is the perpetrator's aggressive and antisocial behaviour, paired with a lack of prosocial skills, which perpetuates the cycle of rejection, social isolation, and subsequent reactive aggression toward peers. In support, Crick and Bigbee (1998) found 30% of perpetrators also reported being victimized. Consistent in female offender populations was that histories of victimization were meaningfully related to perpetration of both physical and psychological aggression (Rivera, Kubiak, & Bybee, 2014).

Victims. Although there is little research that has disentangled victims of relational aggression from perpetrators, some outcomes are more strongly associated with victims. Victims are more likely to present with internalized disorders such as depression, anxiety; report lower self-esteem, self-restraint problems; and were found to be more submissive than their peers (Marshall, Arnold, Rolon-Arroyo & Griffith, 2015; Prinstein et al., 2001). Moreover, researchers have found strong positive correlations between relational aggression victimization and social anxiety, social avoidance, externalizing disorders, and general psychological distress, including chronic stress (Crick & Nelson, 2002). More recently, Leenaars and Lester (2011) examined 106 undergraduate university students to determine the experience and psychosocial impacts of relational aggression victimization. Results yielded significant correlations between relational aggression (as victims and/or perpetrators) and a variety of symptoms, including, but not limited to depression, mania, delinquency, loneliness, peer rejection, assaultive behaviours, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD; Leenaars & Lester, 2011).

Psychopathy

Psychopathy, a characterological disorder, is conceptualized as a unique compilation of personality and emotional traits, interpersonal styles, and assorted deviant behaviours and/or lifestyle choices (Miller & Lynam, 2015; Forth, Bergstrom, & Clark, 2015; Poy, Segarra, Esteller, Lopez, & Molto, 2014). Psychopathy has been an area of experimental and clinical research due to the damaging effects the associated behaviours may cause to individuals and society (Douglas, Nikolova, Kelly, & Edens, 2015). Characteristically, psychopaths have affective deficiencies, exhibit callousness, egocentricity, impulsivity, antisociality, remorselessness, particularly when violating the rights of other, arrogance, parasitic lifestyles, and are exploitive of others, both emotionally and financially (Blackburn, 1998; Cleckley, 1941;

Douglas et al., 2015; Hare, 2003; Lykken, 1995). Additionally, individuals exhibiting psychopathic traits routinely violate the morals and norms of society, exhibit deficient conscience and empathy, and blatantly act in their own interest regardless of the consequences (Barr & Quinsey, 2004). These individuals also have a propensity toward violence, with high criminal recidivism rates (Leistico, Salekin, DeCoster, & Rogers, 2008; Olver, Lewis, & Wong, 2013).

Many theorists have been instrumental in the development and conceptualization of psychopathy, most notably Hervey Cleckley (1941/1988), William McCord and Joan McCord (1964), Benjamin Karpman (1941), and most recently, Robert Hare (1991/2003; Douglas et al., 2015; Miller & Lynam, 2015). Cleckley's primary and influential work in identifying the personality characteristics of psychopathy, the *Mask of Sanity* (1976), has played an integral part in the typifying and in the assessment/diagnosis of psychopathy and associated risk. Based on clients observed in his clinical practice, Cleckley (1941) identified 16 criteria comprising the clinical profile of psychopaths. These criteria, presented in Table 1, focus primarily on psychopathic personality traits and less on the antisocial and behavioural components of psychopathy, so important to future models (e.g., Hare, 1991, 2003; see below). In Cleckley's (1941) opinion, it is the affective deficiencies and interpersonal style that are defining features of psychopathy. The clinical profile he presents clearly depicts an individual who, in many ways, appears prosocial to others but is in fact internally and behaviourally flawed; thus making them a threat to society (Douglas et al., 2015; Miller & Lynam, 2015). In support of Cleckley's clinical profile was McCord and McCord's (1964) assertion that the psychopathic individual's asociality, high impulsivity, aggressiveness, warped capacity for love, and limited capacity to experience guilt and empathy that sets them apart from the average individual.

Table 1

Cleckley's (1941): Clinical Profile of a Psychopath

Interpersonal	Affective	Lifestyle	Antisocial	Other
Superficial charm and good "intelligence"	Lack of remorse/shame	Failure to follow any life plan	Inadequately motivated antisocial behaviour	Specific loss of insight
Unresponsiveness in general interpersonal relations	General poverty in major affective reactions	Poor judgement and failure to learn by experience		Absence of delusions and other signs of irrational thinking
Pathological egocentricity and incapacity for love	Absence of nervousness or psychoneurotic (e.g., anxiety) manifestations	Sex life impersonal, trivial, and poorly integrated		
Untruthfulness and insincerity		Suicide rarely carried out		
		Unreliability		
		Fantastic and uninviting behaviour		

Note: Adapted from Rogstad (2013) and Cleckley (1976)

Evaluation of Cleckley's and McCord and McCord's psychopathic personality models represent a single type comprised of various traits, whereas Karpman's (1948) model delineates two psychopathic personality types: primary or idiopathic and secondary or symptomatic. It was within the development of these typologies where Karpman discourages the perception of psychopathy as homogeneous rather than heterogeneous (Miller & Lynam, 2015). He argued that Cleckley's profile is over-inclusive. Karpman (1948) defined primary psychopaths as organically defective leading to deficits in affective processing and experience. These individuals are noted to be emotionally incapable of experiencing empathy or guilt, are void of anxiety, and present as callous (i.e., insensitive/cruel towards others) and emotionally cold (Falkenbach, Barese, Balash, Reinhard, & Hughs, 2015; Hicks, Vaidyanathan, & Patrick, 2010).

Secondary psychopaths are not considered organically defective but engage in destructive and impulsive behaviour when compared to primary psychopaths; however, they also exhibit deficits in affective processing and experience (Douglas et al., 2015; Karpman 1948).

Differential motives between subtypes also exist as it relates to antisocial behaviour. Primary psychopaths behaviours occur because an innate lack of social conscience and regard for others, whereas secondary psychopaths manifest these behaviours in response to their own anger/frustrations, conflicts, and/or needs, both conscious and unconscious (Miller & Lynam, 2015).

Apart from the original conceptualization of psychopathy made by Cleckley, Hare (1991, 2003) is considered to be the most influential contributor to the conceptualization, assessment, and diagnosis of psychopathy (Miller & Lynam, 2015). Hare (1991, 2003) depicts individuals with psychopathic traits as predators who, through manipulation and charm, use others for their own gain. These individuals are lacking in conscience and feelings for others, acting selfishly while violating social norms and expectations. Furthermore, individuals exhibiting psychopathic traits engage in antisocial and disruptive behaviours without experiencing guilt or regret (Hare, 2003). Hare (1991) developed a two factor-four facet structure model of psychopathy. The Hare Psychopathy Checklist (Hare, 1980) is considered the “gold standard” of psychopathy assessment (Leon-Mayer, Folino, Neumann, & Hare, 2015).

Two central domains, or factors, are included in Hare’s (2003) model: 1) Interpersonal/Affective and 2) Lifestyle/Antisocial, each containing 20 constructs assigned to an appropriate factor (See Table 2). Each factor and facet is allotted the same value (Hare, 2003) but his model places greater emphasis on overt antisocial acts compared to previous models (Douglas et al., 2015; Rogstad, 2013). Although central to Hare’s model of psychopathy,

various researchers (e.g., Cooke & Michie, 2001; Skeem & Cooke, 2010; Walters, 2012) suggest that criminality and antisociality, although correlated, play less of a role in psychopathy than previously assumed, particularly as it relates to female psychopaths (Bolt, Hare, Vitale, & Newman, 2004; Beryl, Chou, & Vollm, 2014).

Table 2

Two-Factor, Four Facet Model of Psychopathy (Hare, 2003)

Factor 1: Interpersonal/Affective		Factor 2: Lifestyle/Antisocial	
Interpersonal	Affective	Lifestyle	Antisocial
Glibness/superficial charm	Failure to accept responsibility	Lack of realistic, long-term goals	Revocation of conditional release
Pathological lying	Callous/lack of empathy	Parasitic lifestyle	Early behaviour problems
Conning/manipulative	Shallow affect	Impulsivity	Juvenile delinquency
Grandiose sense of self worth	Lack of remorse or guilt	Irresponsibility	Criminal versatility
		Need for stimulation/proneness to boredom	Poor behavioural control
		Fantastic and uninviting behaviour with drink and sometimes without	

Note: Additional facet (unassigned): promiscuous behaviour and engagement in many short-term marital relationships

The Three-Factor Model of Psychopathy, originally conceptualized by Cooke and Michie (2001), is best suited for female offenders (Dolan & Vollm, 2009; Jackson, Rogers, Neumann, & Lambert, 2002; Poy et al., 2014; Warren et al., 2003). The Three-factor model of psychopathy divides the original Factor 1 (i.e., Affective/Interpersonal) into two factors and retains the non-criminal constructs of Factor 2 related to lifestyle. The Three-factor model operates on personality as the focal point of psychopathy (Cooke & Michie, 2001). Specifically, their model depicts psychopaths as individuals who are pompous and engage in a deceitful lifestyle (Factor

1), are affectively deficient (Factor 2), and exhibit impulsive and irresponsible behavioural tendencies (Factor 3). The Three-factor model seeks to diminish the impact of criminal behaviour in the conceptualization and classification of psychopathy, viewing criminal acts as behavioural consequence of emotionally careless or reckless behaviours associated with psychopathy. Cooke and Michie (2001) also assert that psychopathy increases the risk an individual will in fact engage in criminal and/or antisocial behaviour.

Female Psychopathy. As in Antisocial Personality Disorder, prevalence rates of psychopathy in females are lower than that of males; however, exact prevalence rates are varied. A recent meta-analysis conducted by Beryl and colleagues (2014) indicated female prevalence rates range between 15-30% across secure/inpatient psychiatric settings and criminal justice settings, with an average prevalence rate of 16-17%. Hicks and colleagues (2010) identified female psychopaths (i.e., women with a PCL-R score of ≥ 25) as exhibiting externalizing behaviours, negative emotionality, low behavioural control, higher frequency and severity of substance abuse, and the emergence of antisociality and criminality at an early age. A recent study by Forouzan and Nicholls (2015) investigated developmental and familial characteristics of women demonstrating high and low psychopathy scores. Results indicate that women scoring high in psychopathy experienced repeated and varied forms of victimizations and came from families lacking in a father figure, experienced disrupted and problematic parent-child relationships, and were exposed to parental violence in the home when compared to low scoring females.

Sex differences in psychopathy between men and women emerge across four domains: a) behaviour, b) interpersonal characteristics, c) psychological/emotional mechanisms, and d) patterns of socialization (e.g., gender specific behavioural and social norms (Forouzan & Cooke,

2005). Behaviourally, female psychopaths manipulate and aggress differently than males. By way of example, women may act flirtatious to manipulate others and are more likely to use social aggression or threats of self-harm to manipulate social networks (e.g., friends and family; Forouzan & Cooke, 2005; Harris, Rice, Hilton, Lalumière, & Quinsey, 2007). In support of the female psychopath's propensity toward relational aggression and social manipulation is their expression of these traits within interpersonal relationships (Verona & Vitale, 2006). By way of example, Cleckley (1941) identified their manipulative and coercive behaviour is more likely to be perpetrated toward peers or family members as compared to strangers or acquaintances. Furthermore, female psychopaths are less likely to exhibit superficial charm and grandiose self-image, a central feature in all models of psychopathy, particularly as it relates to male psychopaths (Rogstad & Rogers, 2008).

The juncture between psychological/emotional mechanisms and socialization is apparent in female psychopaths, whereby motivational factors for particular behaviours, as well as how their behaviour is interpreted differs based on gender norms (Rogstad & Rogers, 2008). As an example, Rogstad and Rogers (2008) explained that what is considered parasitic behaviour (e.g., intentional exploitation of others for financial gain) in men would not be applied to women. Specifically, social norms deem it appropriate for women to rely financially on their husbands, where for men this could be pathologized in men.

Female Psychopaths and Relational Aggression. A growing body of literature has identified relationally aggressive women as frequently exhibiting psychopathic traits, specifically callousness (e.g., reduced emotional reactivity to the distress of others), impulsivity, poor personal planning, lack of empathy, narcissism (i.e., exaggerating abilities and accomplishments), and a tendency toward exploitive interactional patterns (Savage, 2008).

Relationally aggressive behaviour, as well as psychopathy, often emerges in childhood or early adolescence, the former being more consistent with female psychopaths (Verona & Vitale, 2006). Females exhibiting multiple psychopathic traits report more social problems in school related to victimization of peers (Forouzan & Nicholls, 2015) and self-identify as bullies, a phenomenon not observed in males (Cooper, 2008).

Of the psychopathic subtypes, primary psychopathy has a strong association with relational aggression; which is based on core features of psychopathy. Coyne and Thomas (2008) found that relational aggression better predicted primary psychopathy while direct aggression was predictive of secondary psychopathy. The manipulative, exploitive, controlled, and calculated style of primary psychopaths is well suited for a relationally aggressive strategy, which, ideally, provides anonymity while the individual damages the relationships of others through back stabbing or gossiping, as an example (Coyne & Thomas, 2008; Xie et al., 2002). Relational aggression can be perceived as more socially acceptable because the perpetrator is not acting in physically damaging ways and may even be perceived by others as rational or logical when utilized in a covert fashion (Coyne & Thomas, 2008), making it more appropriate for use in adult social settings such as work or school (e.g., university or college).

Conversely, other researchers suggest that, based on the typical psychological and behavioural profile of women psychopaths, secondary psychopathy may be the more appropriate label (Weizmann-Henelius, Virkkunen, Gammelgård, Eronen, & Putkonen, 2015). As mentioned previously, secondary psychopathy is differentiated from primary by its environmental etiology, whereby histories of victimization and neglect produce psychopathic traits and impulsive, anxious behaviours.

Rationale

Inquiry into the global and individual experiences of female offenders, as it pertains to aggression and interpersonal relationships, generally and within correctional facilities, is of particular importance. As previously stated, both physical and relationally aggressive behaviours have been observed in women; however, only physical acts are considered punishable misconducts (Trammell, 2009). Evidence of relational aggression is difficult to observe, thus reports of victimization may be hard to “prove” and, unfortunately, may be dismissed by authorities because perpetrators are difficult to identify. From an institutional perspective, a comprehensive understanding of relational aggression and its use within facilities may assist in the creation of relational aggressor profiles in female offenders; provide a hierarchy of relationally aggressive behaviours most noted in female offenders for the purpose of detection (e.g., social exclusion in units), and contribute to decisions as to whether relational aggression warrants minor institutional misconducts/infractions. An examination of inter-offender relations can also provide insight into the social dynamics present in female offender units, possibly perpetuated by relational aggression, suspected of contributing to an unsettled and hazardous correctional environment (Greer, 2000).

Finally, the association between relational aggression and psychopathic traits in women is unclear as research in this area is particularly sparse, compared to the substantial body of research investigating male psychopathy (Wynn, Hoiseth, & Pettersen, 2012). That being said, research pertaining to the study of female psychopathy is developing (Forth et al., 2015; Salekin & Lynam, 2010). Authors examining female psychopathy (e.g., Douglas et al., 2015; Forouzan & Cooke, 2005; Wynn et al., 2012) emphasize the necessity to add to our conceptualization and assessment of female psychopathy by investigating its structure and role in female offenders and

women in general. The present study intends to address these directives by considering relational aggression as an aspect of female psychopathy. At the very least, knowledge of relational aggression in a correctional setting will certainly inform psychoeducation and awareness of an alternative form of aggression present in women.

Research Questions

The first research question queries the way relational aggression (perpetration and victimization) relates to offence type and antisocial behaviour. Of interest is which relationally aggressive tactics, if any, are utilized in an offender population and whether these tactics (if present) have any predictive qualities (i.e., can relational aggression predict offence type and/or antisocial behaviours). As research indicates, relational aggression may occur in the place of, or as a precursor to, physical aggression (e.g., Rivera et al., 2014; Xie et al., 2002), with differing tactics associated with the former approach (e.g., McAndrew, 2014). By way of extension, this author explored how relational aggression perpetration is related to victimization. Victims often become perpetrators, and vice-versa (Goldweber & Cauffman, 2012); therefore, quantitative examination of co-occurring victimization and perpetration was also explored.

Next, an exploration of female offence behaviours, antisocial behaviour, and relational aggression (i.e., victimization and perpetration), as it relates to psychopathy, was undertaken across offender type (i.e., violent vs. non-violent). Psychopathy research suggests that female offenders exhibiting significant psychopathic traits are best suited to the Three-Factor Model of psychopathy; namely, Arrogant and Deceitful Interpersonal factor (Factor 1), Deficient Affective Experience (Factor 2), and Impulsive and Irresponsible Behavioural Style (Factor 3; Cooke & Michie, 2001). One reported limitation of previous psychopathy studies in women is a focus on only total psychopathy ratings, while paying less attention to individual traits (Warren &

Clarbour, 2009). A quantitative examination of the relationship between individual scales and factors and relational aggression was conducted and interpreted with the above Three-Factor Model in mind.

The final research question concerns how incarcerated women perceive female relationships and relational aggression in a custodial setting. The present study examined each of the aforementioned independently and collaboratively. Women's perceptions and processing of anger differs from that of males (Besharat, Nia, & Farahani 2013); therefore, attaining their unique account of their experience of aggression, will be central to understanding the role of relational aggression in women's lives, particularly in offender samples (Nuytiens & Christianens, 2016). To address this question, an integrated approach (i.e., combining quantitative and qualitative analyses) was utilized to capture the experiences of the incarcerated participants.

Conclusion and Overview of Subsequent Chapters

In summary, the present study investigates the presence and role of relational aggression in a female custodial setting, while also examining the interrelationship between relational aggression and gender-specific forms of antisocial behaviour and psychopathy. To provide an in-depth analysis, the use of both quantitative and qualitative analyses were implemented to allow for an empirical investigation that includes the lived experience of violent and non-violent incarcerated women.

This manuscript begins by describing the recruitment methods, analytical techniques, and measures employed in the current study (Chapter 2). Next, Chapter 3 presents the quantitative, questionnaire data, in order to examine the association between relational aggression perpetration and victimization, antisocial behaviours, and psychopathy, as well as the ability of the

aforementioned variables to predict violent and non-violent female offending behaviours. To extend the findings of Chapter 3, Chapter 4 explores the lived experience of female offenders as it pertains to relational aggression victimization and perpetration and their description and observations of their own antisocial behaviour and that of their peers. Additionally, Chapter 4 draws connections between self-reported and observed behaviours amongst female offenders consistent with the beliefs/attitudes, behavioural presentations, and traits consistent within individuals identified as exhibiting psychopathic traits. The integrated findings obtained during said interviews are presented alongside frequency data extracted from questionnaires to demonstrate consistencies between what is self-reported and what incarcerated women observe.

Finally, Chapter 5 summarizes and consolidates the results derived from the quantitative and qualitative findings reported in Chapters 3 and 4, while conceptualizing the empirical meaning and clinical implications of the present study. The findings of the study that extend current literature are highlighted. Recommendations for future research are also discussed.

The reader will note that each chapter organizes the IV's of the study as follows: relational aggression perpetration and victimization, antisocial behaviour, and psychopathic personality traits, respectively. Where applicable, particularly in Chapter 3, several IV's are examined simultaneously to detect the interaction between variables and/or to demonstrate interrelationships between quantitative and qualitative data. Presenting the data in said order was determined to reflect how each variable, encompassing a problematic trait or behaviour of an individual, is considered more severe than the last and less prevalent. By way of example, those who exhibit more psychopathic traits are viewed as being a greater threat to society, with higher rates of recidivism, than those who are primarily antisocial (Douglas et al., 2015).

Chapter 2: Study Methodology, Methods, and Analyses

Procedure

Participants were recruited from three adult correctional facilities in Ontario, Canada (See participant information below) with both university and Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS) ethical approval (See Appendix A for ethics certificates). Clearance was obtained according to individual facility protocols. Clinical or program support staff posted recruitment flyers on medium and maximum security ranges in each facility inviting women to participate (See Appendix B for a sample recruitment poster). No exclusionary criteria were used. All participants were notified of their right to withdraw at any point without consequence (See Appendix C for consent form). One woman requested her data be removed from the present investigation.

Two testing sessions were held, one in a group setting and the other one-on-one. Group sessions included 5-12 women, depending on how many volunteered prior to each testing session. In most cases, the group session took place in therapy or programming rooms/offices. Testing procedures differed slightly depending on facility regulations and protocols (e.g., testing times and testing offices/rooms). All testing sessions were held outside of programming hours, as well as meal and yard times; sessions were held at the convenience of the facility.

During the initial session participants completed a demographic form requesting general and criminal history information, both versions of the Indirect Aggression Scale (i.e., Aggressor and Target; IAS-A and IAS-T, respectively), the Subtypes of Antisocial Behaviour questionnaire (STAB), and the Psychopathic Personality Inventory-Revised (PPI-R). To control for variations in reading ability and comprehension, all questionnaires were read aloud to participants and questions pertaining to particular items were addressed. Each session took approximately 1.5

hours. When testing was complete, women were asked if they would like to participate in an interview about their personal experiences. This was not a mandatory component of the present study. Participants who consented to an interview were met the following day. Interview sessions were scheduled to last approximately one hour.

Methodology

The present study implemented a mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) to examine relational aggression, female antisocial behaviour, and psychopathy, whereby participants completed a series of psychometric measures, followed by a semi-structured interview. Creswell (2003) described mixed methods as an approach that captures the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to create a comprehensive view of a construct. The use of mixed methods allowed this author to better examine multiple facets of the same phenomenon via triangulation (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). Mixed methods was well suited for this project as it examined both gender-specific (i.e., female) responses on psychometric measures of relational aggression, antisocial behaviour, and psychopathy, as well as explained and described the women's responses vis-à-vis their experiences in custody and with their fellow inmates. Blanchette and Brown (2006) emphasized the value of using a mixed method approach when studying female offenders, as they are a complex, diverse, and marginalized population, limited in numbers.

Data, both quantitative and qualitative, were collected and analyzed separately. Different methods were used according to the nature of the research question. Chapter three pertains primarily to the first two research questions (i.e., how relational aggression relates to offender type; how female offence behaviour and relational aggression relate to psychopathy) utilizing a strictly quantitative approach. In chapter four, the final research question (i.e., how participants

perceive female relationships and relational aggression in custody) was addressed using both qualitative and quantitative analyses. In subsequent sections further details pertaining to the analyses employed are provided.

Quantitative Methods & Analyses. A 2x3x3 factorial design was utilized with offender type (violent vs. non-violent), level of relational aggression perpetration (high, mid range, and low), and level of relational aggression victimization (high, mid range, and low) as the independent variables. Acting as the dependent variables, this study measured the use of relational aggression (Indirect Aggression Scale-Aggressor Version, IAS-A), experiences of relational aggression victimization (Indirect Aggression Scale-Target Version, IAS-T), antisocial behaviour (Subtypes of Antisocial Behaviour, STAB), and the presence of psychopathic traits (Psychopathic Personality Inventory-Revised, PPI-R). See below for a detailed description of each measure.

Variables were assessed for normality and outliers (removed accordingly). Prior to quantitative analyses, mean scores of each psychometric measure were compared to established norms (converted to z-scores) in order to determine whether differences between the current sample and previous research including both offender and non-offender samples. Initial non-parametric chi-square analyses were conducted to examine the association between general and offence demographic categorical characteristics by offence type (i.e., violent vs. non-violent) and level of relational aggression perpetration and victimization (i.e., high, mid-range, and low) by level of perpetration. A combination of parametric and non-parametric analyses were then used to examine the associations between continuous demographic variables by independent variables (i.e., offender type and level of relational aggression perpetration).

Next, a series of bivariate correlations were performed to detect whether significant linear relationships existed between relational aggression perpetration and victimization (IAS-A/IAS-T), antisociality (STAB), and psychopathic traits (PPI-R) by offender type. To determine the ability of the dependent variables to predict offence type and relational aggression perpetration, a binary logistic regression and linear regression were performed, respectively. Last, a series of between-subjects multivariate analysis of variances (MANOVAs) were performed to examine relationships between offence type (i.e., violent vs. non-violent) and level of relational aggression perpetration (i.e., high vs. low) on self-reported relational aggression victimization, antisocial behaviour, and psychopathic personality traits, individually.

Qualitative Methods & Analyses. The semi-structured interviews were informed by basic interpretive inquiry (or Basic Qualitative Study; Merriam, 2002), which focuses on how the participants ascribe meaning to their experiences. To capture the experience of participants, themes are developed (i.e., common experiences/perceptions reported by multiple participants) to capture them (Merriam, 2002). In the current investigation, the examined phenomenon is aggression in incarcerated female offenders. More specifically, how female participants a) define and observe anger in other women and themselves and b) if and how relational aggression contributes to their experiences.

Interview transcripts were analyzed using Thematic Analysis, developed by Aronson (1994), and systematically conceptualized by Braun and Clarke in 2006 (Braun & Clarke, 2014). According to the work of Braun and Clarke (2006), Thematic Analysis involves identifying, evaluating, and producing themes (i.e., patterns of reporting by participants), which allows for a rich description of the participants' experiences. Thematic Analysis is differentiated from other qualitative analytic procedures (e.g., Interpretative phenomenological Approach and Grounded

Theory) in that it does not require a theoretical framework to drive theme development and does not have a pre-determined approach through which interpretations must be made (Braun & Clarke, 2014). Thematic Analysis can be either inductive (i.e., driven by content) or deductive (i.e., interpreted through the previous theories; Braun & Clarke, 2014). For the purpose of the present investigation, a deductive approach was used to develop an improved understanding of female offenders' experiences and to explore the presence of relational aggression in a unique social environment (i.e., Canadian prisons).

Thematic Analysis is frequently employed in forensic/correctional research, with female offenders (e.g., Almond, McManus, Giles, & Huston, 2015; Lambert & O'Halloran, 2008). Correctional and forensic research has for quite some time, acknowledged the importance of gathering the unique account of offenders in order to appreciate, what Scott and Lyman (1968), referred to as "deviant phenomena" (p.46). They also emphasized the usefulness of documenting the interactional nature of quantitative study and individual experiences to better aid in our understanding of such phenomenon; in this case, deviancy (Scott & Lyman, 1968). Braun and Clarke's (2006) Thematic Analysis analytic process consists of six-phases process: 1) familiarizing oneself with data and noting items of interest; 2) developing codes identifying salient words or statements reoccurring across interviews; 3) condensing codes into broad categories or themes; 4) reviewing and re-evaluating the merit of these themes and excluding weaker themes or integrating codes (if applicable); 5) once satisfied, one must define their themes, describe the meaning of such in detail, and assign subthemes (if applicable); and, finally, 6) developing a clear, concise, and compelling presentation of how each theme pertains to the project and how each themes interacts with the others (if applicable).

This author followed the above process to develop themes. Salient and recurrent words and phrases used by participants to describe anger, aggression (relational and physical), interpersonal relationships, and group membership (among friends within and outside correctional facilities) were reviewed several times and assigned defined codes. Summary tables for each theme were created demonstrating the relationship between codes within each theme. Redundant and repetitive themes were collapsed. Themes were labelled using quotations taken from the semi-structured interviews to promote theme validity. Based on theme development, and data integration, a model of relational aggression within female correctional facilities was developed by this author. The model lends itself the conceptualization of the results obtained during the course of the present study. Additionally, the model helps to demonstrate the relationship between the quantitative and qualitative findings (See Chapters 3 and 4, respectively).

To address concerns related to validity and reliability, traditionally, researchers are required to verify the integrity of their results by conducting member checks (i.e., consulting with participants to confirm whether the analyst captured the participants intended meaning); member checks can occur in the moment by querying comments that are unclear and/or after themes have been fully developed (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). Unfortunately, only immediate member checking strategies could be employed; returning to participants following theme development was not feasible. It is common in the correctional system for inmates to be moved between facilities or released for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to, transfers to a special handling unit, transfers to specialized facilities (e.g., Aboriginal healing lodges), to treatment centres, for judicial review of parole eligibility, to attend court proceedings, or to accommodate facility needs (e.g., approaching

capacity; Statistics Canada, 2015). It is important to note that, in accordance with the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS) regulations prohibiting the use of recording devices in correctional facilities, interviews were handwritten and electronic copies (i.e., word documents) were created for each interview shortly afterward. Direct quotes were manually recorded when possible.

Participants.

This study included 56 female offenders recruited from three facilities in Ontario, Canada: the Algoma Treatment and Remand Centre (Sault Ste. Marie, ON); the Sudbury District Jail (Sudbury, ON); and the Vanier Centre for Women (Milton, ON). Of the total sample, 30 participants were considered violent and 24 were non-violent. Offence type was not available for two participants included in the sample. Two participants withdrew from the study after completing the measures and three terminated testing mid-session. Of the final sample, 77% ($n=44$) were obtained from the Vanier Centre for Women; 14% ($n=8$) were from the Sudbury District Jail; and 7% ($n=4$) from the Algoma Treatment and Remand Centre. Some participants had been sentenced while others were on remand (i.e., awaiting sentencing). Of the total sample, 16 offenders completed semi-structured interviews.

IV Classification of Participants. Participants were classified as violent offenders if they had self-reported violent criminal acts (e.g., assault, homicide, uttering threats, etc.). In accordance with Mahoney and Karatzais (2012) and Statistics Canada (2008), violent offending is defined as intentional, forceful infliction of pain or harm to another individual and encompasses a variety of acts, ranging from uttering death threats to first-degree murder. More specifically, violent crimes include Homicide, Attempted Murder, Sexual Assault (level 1-3), Sexual Violations Against Children, Assault (level 1-3), Assault Against a Peace Officer,

Firearms (use of, discharge, and pointing), Robbery, Forcible Confinement/kidnapping, Abduction, Extortion, Criminal Harassment, Uttering Threats, and Indecent or Harassing Phone Calls (Statistics Canada, 2013). Disclosed in the current investigation were charges for Homicide, Attempted Murder, Assault, and Uttering Threats (mainly death threats; see demographics). It should be noted that some participants reported combined offence types; however, if they reported violent criminal acts, currently or by history, they were assigned a violent classification. As a result, 54% ($n=30$) were classified as “violent offenders” and 43% ($n=24$) were classified as “non-violent”. For classification of high or low levels of relational aggression perpetration and victimization, a quartile split was performed, where the top and bottom 25% of the sample were designated as high and low, respectively (see Table 4 for specific details).

General Demographic Characteristics.

Participants were asked to provide their age, ethnicity, level of education, and relationship status. The mean age of participants was 33.6, ranging from 19-54 years of age. On average, participants were 21 years old at first offence and self-reported an average of 7.5 incarcerations to date (including current offence). Slightly above half of the sample was Caucasian, followed by First Nations, African Canadian, and Middle Eastern and Hispanic. The majority had completed or partially completed secondary school (i.e., grades 9, 10, and/or 11), accounting for 27% and 32% of the sample, respectively. Of the remaining participants, 18.9% completed college, 11.3% completed elementary school, 5.7% were university graduates, and 1.9% did not complete grade school. Nearly half of the participants, 45.1% of the sample indicated that they were single, whereas 35.3% indicated they were single with a partner, 15.7% were married or engaged, and 3.9% were divorced. See Table 3.

Table 3

General Demographics of Total Sample and by Offender Type (i.e., Violent and Non-violent)

Characteristic	Total Sample (N=56)		Violent (n=30)		Non-Violent (n=24)	
	M (N)	SD	M (n)	SD	M (n)	SD
Age	33.58 (55)	8.94	31.37 (30)	7.92	36.29 (24)	9.72
	Range: 19-54		Range: 22-49		Range: 19-54	
Characteristic	N	%*	n	%*	n	%*
Ethnicity						
Caucasian	29	55.80	16	55.20	13	59.10
First Nations	13	25.00	9	31.00	3	13.60
African Canadian	6	11.50	2	6.90	4	18.20
Middle Eastern	2	3.80	1	3.40	1	4.50
Hispanic	2	3.80	1	3.40	1	4.50
Level of Education Completed						
Some grade school	1	1.90	0	0.00	1	4.30
Completed grade school	6	11.30	3	10.30	3	13.00
Grade 9-11	18	34.00	11	37.90	7	30.40
Completed secondary	15	28.30	9	31.00	6	26.10
College (partial/completed)	10	18.90	6	20.70	3	13.00
University (partial/completed)	3	5.70	0	0.00	3	13.00
Marital Status						
Single without partner	23	45.10	13	48.10	10	41.70
Single with partner	18	35.50	8	29.60	10	41.70
Married/Engaged	8	15.70	4	14.80	3	12.50
Divorced/Separated	2	3.90	2	7.40	0	0.00

*Two participants did not indicate their offence type.

Offender Demographics and Offence Characteristics.

Participants were requested to provide details regarding offence history, including their age of first offence, number of times incarcerated (approx.), number of reported concurrent offences, and current offence. Participants were also asked to indicate whether they had ever been accused of and/or charged with a violent offence (e.g., assault) and whether this was their first sentence served in custody (at time of testing). Of the offences, 69.1% of the sample had been accused of and charged with a physical assault at the time of testing. A variety of offences were self-reported, with 40.7% being charged with an Assault, 20.4% with Theft/fraud, 13.0% with Murder/attempted murder, 11.1% with break and enter, 3.7% for Drug-related offences, 5.6% with an immigration related charge 3.7% with a non-aggressive act such as trespassing, and

1.9% due to solely to breach of probation. At the time of the study, 28.3% indicated it was their first incarceration. Participants self-reported an average of 1.9 charges associated with current imprisonment, ranging from 1- 4, with 40.7% also having a non-violent charge included in their current charge (e.g., primary charge of assault and secondary charge of possession). See Table 4.

Table 4

Offender Demographics and Offence Characteristics based on Total Sample and by Offence Type (i.e., Violent and Non-violent)

Characteristic	Total Sample (N=56)*		Violent (n=30)		Non-Violent (n=24)	
	M (N)	SD	M (n)	SD	M (n)	SD
Age of 1 st Offence	21.00 (54) Range: 10-48	9.73	19.38 (29) Range: 11-39	7.92	23.21 (24) Range: 10-48	11.53
# of Time Incarcerated to Date (including current offence)	6.86 (46)	7.86	7.20 (23)	8.54	6.52 (23)	7.29
# of reported concurrent offences	Range: 1-27 1.91 (54)	.87	Range: 1-27 2.27 (30)	.91	Range: 1-22 1.46 (24)	.59
	Range: 1-4		Range: 1-4		Range: 1-3	
Characteristic	N	%*	n	%	n	%
Current Offence						
Assault	23	40.70	23	76.70	0	0.00
Break and Enter (B&E)	6	11.10	0	0.00	6	25.00
Theft/Fraud	11	20.40	0	0.00	10	41.70
Drug Related	2	3.70	0	0.00	2	8.30
Murder/Attempted Murder	7	13.00	7	23.30	0	0.00
Immigration	3	5.60	0	0.00	3	12.50
Breach	1	1.90	0	0.00	1	4.20
Other (eg. Trespassing)	2	3.70	0	0.00	2	8.30
Accused of/charged with a physical assault						
Yes	38	69.10	26	86.70	11	45.80
No	17	30.90	4	13.30	13	54.20
Sentence Served in Custody						
1 st time	13	28.30	7	30.40	6	26.10
Repeat	33	71.70	16	69.60	17	73.90
Level of RA Perpetration						
High	19	35	12	40	7	29
Mid	18	18	9	30	8	33
Low	19	19	9	30	9	38
Level of RA Victimization						
High	18	32	10	33	9	38
Mid	19	34	9	30	8	33
Low	19	19	11	37	7	29

*Two participants did not indicate their offence type.

Quantitative Measures

In order to quantify participant's experiences and behaviours associated with relational aggression, antisocial behaviour, and psychopathic traits, each participant completed four questionnaires. Results from each measure were used to either to assess their association between violent or non-violent female offenders and/or to support the qualitative results (see Chapter 3).

The Indirect Aggression Scale: Aggressor and Target Versions (IAS-A; IAS-T; Forrest et al., 2005). Relational aggression perpetration and victimization was assessed using the Aggressor (IAS-A) and target (IAS-T) version of the Indirect Aggression Scale, respectively. The IAS-A/T has been used across various studies to examine relationally aggressive behaviours in non-criminal populations (e.g., Coyne & Thomas, 2008; Warren & Clarbour, 2009), some of which also include psychopathy as a variable of interest (e.g., Vaillancourt & Sunderani, 2011). Each version consists of 25 questions reported on a five-point likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (regularly) based on how often they have engaged in relationally aggressive behaviours (IAS-A) and how often they have been victimized by the same strategies (IAS-T). Both measures yield three subscales, namely, Social Exclusion (10 items), Use of Malicious Humour (9 items), and the Guilt Induction subscale (6 items). Potential scores range from 25-125. Administration of the IAS-A and IAS-T was counterbalanced between testing groups to ensure receiving the target version (or aggressor version) first did not influence the results of the subsequent version.

The Social Exclusion scale measures behaviours intended to exclude the victim (e.g., “turned other people against them” [item 25; IAS-A]). Malicious Humour, a more direct form of relational aggression, includes instances where humour is used to harm the victim (e.g., “used

sarcasm to insult them” [item 2; IAS-A]). The third scale, Guilt Induction, pertains to those behaviours whereby guilt or emotion is used to manipulate or harm someone else (e.g., “used their feelings to coerce them” [item 8; IAS-A]). In the target version, statements are reworded to reflect being the target of the former behaviours (e.g., “used sarcasm to insult me”- item 18; IAS-T Malicious Humour scale) (Forrest et al., 2005). Responses to all 25 items on each version were added to form two summary scores, a total aggressor (IAS-A Total) and score (IAS-T Total). Higher scores are indicative of greater use of relationally aggressive behaviours and/or frequency of victimization.

Normed on an undergraduate and post-graduate sample of university students ($n= 588$; 285 females and 177 males), both versions of the IAS have demonstrated good internal consistency, with Cronbach’s Alpha’s ranging from 0.81-0.84 and 0.81-0.89 on the aggressor and target versions, respectively (Coyne, Manning, Ringer, & Baily, 2007; Forrest et al., 2005). In the present study IAS-A total and subscale scores yielded particularly strong internal consistency ranging from .80 to .94. The IAS-T’s internal consistency was also strong, with ranging from .89-.97.

The Subtypes of Antisocial Behaviour Questionnaire (STAB; Burt & Donnellan, 2009). The Subtypes of Antisocial Behaviour Questionnaire (STAB) assesses three major facets of antisocial behaviour: physical aggression (AGG; 10 items), social aggression (SA; 11 items), and rule breaking (RB; 11 items), yielding subscales of the same name (Burt & Donnellan, 2009). Respondents are required to report how frequently they have engage in 32 behaviours affiliated with each domain, in their lifetime, on a 5-point likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (nearly all the time). Some behaviours include “got into physical fights (physical aggression scale), “intentionally damaged someone’s reputation” (social aggression scale), and “broke into a

store, mall, or warehouse” (rule-breaking scale; Burt & Donnellan, 2009). Adding item scores provided this author with a Total score; higher scores indicate greater frequency of antisocial behaviour, with potential scores can range from 32-160 (Yaacob, Idris, & Wan, 2015). Recent research has utilized the STAB as a means to understand adult antisocial behaviour and the development of antisocial traits in adolescents (e.g., Burt, Klump, Kashy, Gorman-Smith, & Neiderhiser, 2015; Park, Schwartz, Lee, Kim, & Rodriguez, 2012).

The STAB has been shown to effectively differentiate between community samples/college students and offender samples (Burt & Donnellan, 2009), significantly relating to offending behaviour and acting out. Results pertaining to the social aggression scale will be of particular importance to the present study, predicting maladaptive behaviours in women (Burt & Donnellan, 2009). The STAB was normed using five different groups: 2 college samples ($n=900$ combined), two adjudicated samples (i.e., on parole or under supervision; $n=373$ combined), and one community sample ($n=398$) (Burt & Donnellan, 2009), yielding strong internal consistency (i.e., α s ranging from .82 to .86); the same was observed in the current study with α s ranging from .87 to .94.

Psychopathic Personality Inventory-Revised (PPI-R; Lilienfeld & Widows, 2005).

Psychopathic Personality Inventory-Revised (PPI-R) was utilized to evaluate psychopathic and antisocial personality traits in female offender populations. Originally developed in 1990 by Lilienfeld, the PPI family of measures (i.e., PPI, PPI-R, PPI-S) has become “the most widely validated self-report measures of psychopathy” (Douglas et al., 2015, p. 272). At this time, the PPI-R is also used with offender samples, including women (e.g., Anderson, Stanford, Wan, & Young, 2011). Advantageous is the multiple aspects of psychopathy, reminiscent of Cleckley’s

model of psychopathy, it examines and quantifies (Cox et al., 2013; Lilienfeld & Fowler, 2006), as well as its ability to predict subtypes of psychopathy (i.e., primary and secondary).

The PPI-R consists of 154 items rated on a 4-point likert scale from 1 (false) to 4 (True) (Lilienfeld & Widows, 2005). The items comprise eight content subscales: Machiavellian Egocentricity, Social Influence, Coldheartedness, Carefree Nonplanfulness, Fearlessness, Blame Externalization, Rebellious Nonconformity, and Stress Immunity (Lilienfeld & Widows, 2005). Some items are reversed scored, with the range of potential scores differing based on the subscale being considered. Additionally, three factor scores: Fearless Dominance (Factor 1) and Self-Centered Impulsivity (Factor 2), and Coldheartedness (Factor 3) exist. Additionally, a total score is also obtained by summing all responses; the total score is considered a global measure of psychopathy (Douglas et al., 2015). Global psychopathy refers to degree to which an individual matches the traditional profiles of psychopathy proposed by Cleckly, Hare, and other prominent figures in psychopathy research (Lilienfeld and Widows. 2005). Details describing each subscale, grouped by factor and including examples of scale questions can be found in Table 5.

In terms of prediction, Factor 1 is able to predict anger, depression, low anxiety, narcissism, and substance abuse, whereas Factor 2 better predicts anger, hostility, impulsivity, psychiatric symptoms, substance abuse and violent risk (Edens & McDermott, 2010; Ray, Poythress, Weir, & Rickelm, 2009). The third factor contains one scale, Coldheartness (Factor 3). Coldheartness correlates with the other subscales of the PPI-R and is an essential component of psychopathy. Therefore, some researchers (e.g., Gaugham, Miller, Pryor, & Lynman, 2006), including this author, will explore and account for Coldheartness. The PPI-R structure is stated to be consistent with the Three-Factor model of psychopathy (Lilienfeld & Widows, 2005).

The normative sample consisted of two undergraduate samples (610 students; 361 females; 249 males) and one offender sample (154 male inmates). Reliability coefficients, represented as Cronbach's Alpha's, ranged from $\alpha = .78$ to $\alpha = .87$ for college samples and $\alpha = .71$ to $\alpha = .83$ for inmate samples (Lilienfeld & Widows, 2005). Further psychometric testing was conducted on female offenders ($n = 102$) to validate this measure, finding α s ranging from .89 for the total score and between .64 and .84 for the eight content subscales (Berardino, 1999). In the current sample, scale α s ranged from .71 (Blame Externalization) to .84 (Carefree Nonplanfulness). Similar findings were found for the Total score ($\alpha = .84$), Factor 1 ($\alpha = .89$), and Factor 2 ($\alpha = .87$).

Table 5:

PPI-R Factors and Scales

Factor/scales (items)	Description	Example
Factor 1: Fearless Dominance		
Social Influence (18)	Perceived ability to influence and manipulate others	"I'm good at getting people to do favours for me"
Fearlessness (14)	Absence of anticipatory anxiety re: a willingness to participate in risky activities	"When my life gets boring I like to take chance"
Stress Immunity (13)	Absence of marked reactions to anxiety-provoking events	"I don't get nervous under pressure"
Factor 2: Self-Centered Impulsivity		
Machiavellian Egocentricity (20)	Narcissistic and ruthless attitudes in interpersonal functioning	"I would be a good 'con artist'"
Rebellious Nonconformity (16)	Reckless lack of concern regarding social norms	"I have always seen myself as something of a rebel"
Carefree Nonplanfulness (19)	Attitude of indifference in planning one's action	"I like to act first and think later"
Blame Externalization (15)	Tendency to blame others for one's problems and to rationalize one's misbehaviour	"If I had fewer breaks in life, I'd be more successful"
Factor 3: Coldheartedness		
Coldheartedness (16)	Propensity toward callousness, guiltlessness, and lack of sentimentality	"I look out for myself before I look out for someone else"

Note: Chart adapted from Lilienfeld & Widows (2005)

Typically, when the PPI-R was used to measure psychopathic traits, authors reported and analysed the raw scores of participants (e.g., Hughes et al., 2013). Therefore, for the purpose of comparison and consistency, raw scores were reported and analysed (see Chapter 3). Although not used for statistical analysis, PPI-R factor and subscale t-scores of the total sample, as well as by offender type (i.e., violent and non-violent), derived from raw score conversion procedures (Lilienfeld & Widows, 2005) were also reported.

The rationale for examining and reporting t-scores is that it allows for the clinical interpretation of the sample mean scores and offers a profile of the psychopathic traits reported by the women included in this study. On the PPI-R, as is standard in personality research (Lilienfeld & Widows, 2005), t-scores at or above 65 are indicative of clinical significance. Significant elevations enable the clinician to identify whether the level of endorsement of, in this case, of psychopathic traits/attitudes, is of practical (e.g., treatment planning) and/or diagnostic value (Fethney, 2010). Despite reporting PPI-R Total scores, Lilienfeld and Widows (2005) instruct clinicians and researchers to interpret PPI-R total scores with caution, emphasizing that several content elevations, although likely to yield a clinically significant total score, may be misleading. They suggest using content scores to develop the profile as opposed to relying on the total score. That being said, the authors note an extremely high total score would suggest the individual's congruence with prominent characterizations of a psychopathic individual (e.g., manipulateness and poor impulse control). For the purpose of the present investigation, this author will report on the total t-score but rely on the content scores to produce the current sample profile.

Qualitative Semi-Structured Interview.

In accordance with Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), an interview guide was developed accounting for previous literature regarding relational aggression, anger, and female interpersonal relationships. Using a basic interpretive approach (see above for description), this author conducted 16 interviews with female offenders at their current institution. The interviews consisted of 16 open-ended questions (see Appendix D for the full interview schedule). Questions were related to four areas of inquiry, these included group membership (e.g., “Do you feel you belong to a group in this institution and/or “on the outside”? How important is this group to you?”), relationships/friendships (e.g., “What does friendship typically look like between women?”), personal expressions of anger (e.g., “What do you do if you wanted to be ‘mean’ to someone?”), and, finally, offences (e.g., “Have you ever used your relationship to ‘get away’ with a criminal act? Why/why not?”). A prompt was often utilized to obtain more data. For example, “Describe what your friends are like” would have been “How do you know them? What kind of people are they? How often do you hang out?”. Interviews were conducted by this author and lasted from approximately 20 mins to one hour, based upon facility operations (e.g., units locked down). Interviews were shortened on some occasions so as to not interfere with said operations.

Summary of Chapter

Fifty-six incarcerated female offenders recruited from three correctional facilities in Ontario volunteered to participate in the present mixed-methods study. In the first testing session, the women were asked to complete questionnaires (quantitative methods) pertaining to relational aggression perpetration (IV1) and victimization (IV2; IAS-A and IAS-T, respectively), antisocial behaviour (IV3; STAB), and psychopathic traits and beliefs/ attitudes (IV4; PPI-R).

Sixteen of the 56 women also participated in a second testing session where semi-structured interviews were conducted. Interviews queried their lived experience as it related to the above independent variables particularly relational aggression. All participants reported their demographic information and criminal history. The current study included primarily Caucasian participants, in their early 30's, who had completed or partially completed secondary school, and were single at the time of testing. The offence profile of participants indicated they first offended in their early 20's and had been incarcerated approximately 7-8 times, approximately 41% reported being charged with a violent offence. Employing both quantitative (2x2x3 factorial design; parametric and non-parametric analyses) and qualitative analyses (Thematic Analysis-Integrated Approach), the present study was constructed to extract a comprehensive investigation of the presence and presentation of relational aggression, antisocial behaviour, and gender-specific psychopathic traits

Chapter 3: A Quantitative Examination of Relational Aggression, Antisocial Behaviour, and Psychopathy in Female Offenders

The following chapter examines the presence of relational aggression in female offenders and identifies the use of relationally aggressive tactics, as well as the relationship between relational aggression, offence type, and antisocial behaviour in the current sample (RQ1). Additional analyses were performed to examine group differences based on demographic variables and predictive ability of the aforementioned variables. Subsequently, the following chapter reports the significant relationships found between relational aggression, antisocial behaviours, and psychopathic traits within a female offender population (RQ2). The analysis contained herein is quantitative in nature and based upon data obtained from questionnaires designed to measure relational aggression victimization and perpetration, antisocial behaviour, and psychopathic traits. Parametric (i.e., multivariate and regression) and non-parametric (i.e., chi-square and Mann-Whitney tests of association) analyses were conducted.

Assessing demographic and offence characteristics across offender type

As reported in Chapter 2 (Methods), the overall demographic profile of the current sample was approximately 34 years of age, first offended when they were aged 21, self-reported approximately 7.5 incarcerations to date, were primarily Caucasian, and had partially completed their secondary education. In regards to relationship status, the majority of the current sample indicated they were not currently in a romantic relationship. In the way of offence criminal characteristics, approximately 72% were repeat offenders. To better examine whether demographic differences existed between violent and non-violent offenders, both categorical and continuous variables were analyzed. The categorical variables of the present study include ethnicity, level of education, relationship status, and 1st vs. repeated incarcerations. Age, age of first offence, and number of incarceration to date were continuous.

All variables yielded non-normal distributions; therefore, chi-square tests (non-parametric) were run to examine the association between the categorical demographic variables and offender type. No significant associations were observed between offender type and ethnicity, $X^2(4, N=51) = 3.07, p = .55$, level of education, $X^2(5, N=52) = 5.88, p = .32$, or relationship status, $X^2(4, N=51) = 2.98, p = .56$. Furthermore, no significant association were observed for offender type or 1st vs. repeated incarceration, $X^2(1, N=46) = .11, p = .74$. Of the three continuous variables, only age was normally distributed; therefore, separate parametric and non-parametric analyses were conducted. For the relationship between age (normally distributed) and offender type, a single Independent samples *t-test* was conducted, yielding a statistically significant difference, $t(52) = 2.05, p < .05, d = .55$. In the current sample, violent females ($M = 31.37, SD = 7.92$) were younger than non-violent offenders ($M = 36.29, SD = 9.72$).

For non-normally distributed variables, *Mann-Whitney* non-parametric analyses were run to compare age of first offence and incarcerations to date by offender type. Results indicated that the age of first offence for violent offenders ($Mdn = 17.00$) did not significantly differ from non-violent offenders ($Mdn = 19.50$), $U = 284.50, z = -1.14, ns$. Similarly, number of incarcerations to date did not differ between violent ($Mdn = 3.50$) and non-violent offenders ($Mdn = 3.00$), $U = 264.00, z = -.01, p = .99$. Overall, of all demographic variables, examined by offence type, the only significant association was in regards to age, whereby violent offenders were younger than non-violent. In all other respects, violent and non-violent offenders were similar.

Assessing demographic variables across level of relational aggression perpetration and level of relational aggression victimization

Additional chi-square tests were run to examine the association between the categorical demographic variables (i.e., ethnicity, level of education, etc.) and level of relational aggression perpetration (IV2), as well as level of relational aggression victimization (IV3), respectively. Participants were divided into high, low, and mid-range groups. Lack of statistical significance was found when level of relational aggression perpetration was examined in relation to the categorical variables of ethnicity, $X^2 (8, N=52) = 5.30, p = .73$, level of education, $X^2 (10, N=53) = 7.41, p = .69$, relationship status, $X^2 (8, N=51) = 10.77, p = .22$, or 1st vs. repeat offending, $X^2 (2, N=46) = .30, p = .86$. The same non-significant associations were observed when examining level of relational aggression victimization: ethnicity, $X^2 (8, N=52) = 10.85, p = .21$, level of education, $X^2 (10, N=53) = 14.43, p = .15$, relationship status, $X^2 (8, N=51) = 6.45, p = .60$, and 1st vs. repeat offending, $X^2 (2, N=46) = 3.89, p = .14$.

For the purpose of analyzing continuous variables and RA perpetration, only those who were in the high and low relational aggression perpetration and victimization groups were included to examine the association between age and relational aggression perpetration. Results of a single Independent samples *t-test* indicated no significant differences exist between these groups based on age, $t(35) = 1.78, p = .08$. The non-normal variables, age of first offence, and number of times incarcerated to date were assessed using *Mann-Whitney* non-parametric analyses. Results indicated that age of first offence did not differ between those high ($Mdn = 16.00$) and low ($Mdn = 21.00$) in relational aggression perpetration, $U = 111.00, z = -1.60, p = .11$. The same was found for number of times incarcerated to date, $U = 80.50, z = -1.27, p = .20$. There

existed no difference between those high ($Mdn = 6.00$) and low ($Mdn = 2.00$) in relational aggression perpetration.

Taken together, these findings indicate that regardless of level of relational aggression perpetration, offence characteristics do not differ. An examination of the association between age and victimization (IV3) was also non-significant, based on the results of a single Independent samples *t-test*, $t(36) = .00$, $p = 1.00$. Consistent with above results, there existed no significant difference between the high ($Mdn = 18.00$) or low ($Mdn = 18.00$) victimization groups based on age at first offence, $U = 167.00$, $z = -.40$, $p = .69$, and no significant difference between high ($Mdn = 2.00$) and low ($Mdn = 3.00$) victimization in regards to number of times incarcerated to date, $U = 94.00$, $z = -.94$, $p = .35$, was observed. In summation, the results indicated the former demographic features did not differ between levels of the study IV's.

Assessing association between study IV's (offender type, level of relational aggression perpetration, and level of relational aggression victimization) and their relationship to study DV's (relational aggression, antisocial behaviours, and psychopathic traits) by variable

A series of non-parametric chi-square analyses and 2x3 between-subject multivariate ANOVA's were also conducted to examine the association between relational aggression perpetration in violent and non-violent offenders and victimization by way of relational aggression, antisocial behaviours, and psychopathic traits, respectively. Three MANOVA's utilized offender type (i.e., violent vs. non-violent) and level relational aggression perpetration (i.e., high, mid-range, or low) as IV's, with level of relational aggression victimization (all subscales of IAS-T), antisocial behaviour (all subscales of STAB), and psychopathic traits (all subscales of the PPI-R) entered as DV's, respectively. Additionally, a one-way MANOVA

examined the association between psychopathic traits (factor scores and subscales of PPI-R) for the purpose of clinical interpretation. Total scores for all measures (i.e., IAS-T Total, STAB-Total, and PPI-R Total) were excluded as they are highly influenced by the subscale scores that comprise each scale. In most cases, total scores reflect elevations on particular scales as opposed to elevations across all subscales.

Associations between study IV's and their relationship to relational aggression (IAS-A/IAS-T scores). To examine whether group differences exist, chi-square tests of association were conducted to determine if offender type was associated with the categorical levels of relational aggression perpetration and level of relational aggression victimization (i.e., high, low, and mid-range), as well as whether there was an association between perpetrators and victims. Results indicated there was no association between offence type and level of relational aggression perpetration, $\chi^2(2, N=54) = .71, p = .70$, nor was there a relationship between offender type and relational aggression victimization, $\chi^2(2, N=54) = .34, p = .85$. Additionally, chi-square analyses found no significant association between the participants level of relational aggression perpetration and victimization, $\chi^2(4, N=56) = 3.90, p = .42$. Taken together, the above tests of association suggest the occurrence of relational aggression perpetration and victimization between violent and non-violent offenders is quite similar.

Utilizing a single 2x3 MANOVA, an examination of the relationship between level of relational aggression perpetration, offence type, and experiences of relational aggression victimization by way of social exclusion, malicious humour, and guilt induction (IAS-T subscales) was undertaken. Using Pillai's statistic, the multivariate interaction effects were non-significant, $V = .11, F(6, 94) = .92, p = .49$, indicating that the joint effect of level of relational aggression perpetration and offender type did not account for a significant portion of the variance

in relational aggression victimization. The main effects of level of relational aggression perpetration, $V = .18$, $F(6, 94) = 1.57$, $p = .16$, and offence type, $V = .04$, $F(3, 46) = .70$, $p = .56$, were also non-significant. These findings demonstrate that the women, again, regardless of level of relational aggression perpetration or offence type, were victimized by way of social exclusion, malicious humour, and guilt induction (IAS-A subscales) equally. To elaborate on the quality of relational aggression as being antisocial in nature, antisocial behaviours, as measured by the STAB were analyzed in a similar fashion as IAS-A/IAS-T scores.

Associations between study IV's and their relationship to antisocial behaviour (STAB scores). A second 2x3 factorial MANOVA examined the relationship between the IV's (i.e., level of relational aggression perpetration and offender type) by subtypes of antisocial behaviours, namely physical aggression, social aggression, and rule breaking behaviour. There was a non-significant interaction of the IV's on antisociality, $V = .07$, $F(6, 94) = .59$, $p = .74$. A non-significant main effect of offender type was also observed, $V = .08$, $F(3, 46) = 1.37$, $p = .28$. However, a significant main effect of level of relational aggression perpetration was observed, $V = .11$, $F(6, 94) = .35$, $p = .01$, $\eta^2 = .17$, indicating a difference between antisocial behaviours across the levels of relational aggression perpetration (i.e., high, mid-range, low). Follow-up ANOVA's showed significant differences between level of perpetration on social aggression, $F(2, 48) = 4.21$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .15$, but not for physical aggression, $F(2, 48) = 1.33$, $p = .27$, or rule breaking behaviours, $F(2, 48) = .77$, $p = .47$. As expected, those high in relational aggression perpetration ($M = 33.16$, $SD = 10.80$) reported significantly more socially aggressive behaviours as compared to those who fell in the low ($M = 24.22$, $SD = 9.73$) and mid ranges ($M = 29.82$, $SD = 5.90$), wherein no significant differences were observed. Overall, these findings indicated that individuals who reported high levels of relational aggression perpetration were also high in

social aggression, but exhibited similar levels of physical aggression and rule breaking behaviour. As an extension of antisocial behaviour, similar analyses were performed on questionnaire data that examined the presence of psychopathic traits in female offenders.

Associations between study IV's and their relationship to psychopathic traits (PPI-R scores). To examine the association of the IV's on psychopathic traits, a final 2x3 MANOVA utilized all PPI-R subscales as DV's. Individual subscales were entered as opposed to factors to allow specific traits to be examined. Results indicated there was a non-significant interaction between relational aggression perpetration and offender type on psychopathic traits, $V = .18$, $F(16, 84) = .51$, $p = .93$. There was also a non-significant main effect of level of relational aggression perpetration on self-reported pattern of psychopathic traits, $V = .48$, $F(16, 84) = 1.65$, $p = .07$; however, a significant main effect of offender type was observed, $V = .35$, $F(8, 41) = 2.75$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .35$.

Follow-up one-way ANOVA's reveal three PPI-R subscales to be statistically different between violent and non-violent offenders, namely Rebellious Nonconformity, $F(1, 48) = 13.20$, $p < .001$, $\eta = .22$; Carefree Nonplanfulness, $F(1, 48) = 6.42$, $p = .02$, $\eta = .12$; and Coldheartedness, $F(1, 48) = 4.32$, $p = .04$, $\eta = .08$. Rebellious Nonconformity and Carefree Nonplanfulness, both subscales of Factor 2: Self-Centered Impulsivity, indicate violent offenders ($M = 46.83$, $SD = 7.86$; $M = 43.57$, $SD = 10.42$, respectively) exhibited higher levels of such traits relative to non-violent offenders ($M = 38.88$, $SD = 8.61$; $M = 36.75$, $SD = 6.75$, respectively). Coldheartedness, an individual factor and sole subscale of Factor 3 (of the same name), also suggests that violent offenders ($M = 32.47$, $SD = 7.68$) report higher coldhearted thoughts, beliefs, and behaviours as compared to nonviolent ($M = 28.17$, $SD = 32.47$). Taken together, violent offenders exhibited more callousness, guiltlessness, sentimentality, and had a characterological tendency toward

egocentricity and ruthlessness, and harboured a general disregard for social norms and rules. In addition, a clinical analysis of participant scores was also undertaken.

Clinical elevations of psychopathic traits in the current sample. T-scores reflecting clinically elevated traits in the total sample, as well as amongst violent and non-violent female offenders were examined. Factor and subscales elevations in the clinical range were relatively consistent between violent and non-violent offenders; however, those scores affiliated with violent offenders exceeded those of non-violent offenders. Subclinical scores were also observed in the profiles of the overall sample, as well as the violent and non-violent groups. As expected, the total sample reflected the content scores/factors and subscales that fell in the clinical or subclinical ranges in the violent and non-violent offender groups; therefore, the total sample profile will not be discussed to avoid repetition. It should be noted that clinical elevations could not be reported from the IAS-A, the IAS-T, or the STAB, as these scales are not designed to draw clinical conclusions. The aforementioned measures are intended to reflect the presence of relationally aggressive and antisocial traits in participants by way of endorsement of behaviours and experiences.

A common trend emerged across profiles with clinically significant elevation on the Self-Centered Impulsivity (Factor 2) factor score observed in both violent and non-violent offenders. Fearless Dominance (Factor 1) and Coldheartedness (Factor 3) were not found to be clinically elevated across offender types. The profile of psychopathic traits in violent female offenders included clinical or subclinical elevations on all Self-Centered Impulsivity subscales (Factor 2). The Machiavellian Egocentricity and Rebellious Nonconformity subscales of the Self-Centered Impulsivity (Factor 2) scale fell in the clinical range and the Blame Externalization and Carefree Nonplanfulness subscales in the subclinical range (i.e., *t-scores* between 60-64). The only

subscale of the Fearless Dominance content scale (Factor 1) to emerge as clinically significant in any of the profiles developed here was the Fearlessness subscale, which reflects low anticipatory anxiety and wilful engagement in risk-taking behaviours. In non-violent offenders, Rebellious Nonconformity was the only subscale that fell in the clinically elevated range, with Blame Externalization and Machiavellian Egocentricity falling in the subclinical range.

As stated previously, similar elevations in the clinical profiles of violent and non-violent offenders was observed, but differences in magnitude were found, suggesting the clinical profiles of violent and non-violent offenders are statistically significant. To this end, a one-way MANOVA was performed. Offender type was entered as the IV and all PPI-R subscales were entered to ensure specific elevations could be examined and to clarify the scores producing the observed clinically elevated content/factor scores (i.e., Fearless Dominance [Factor 1]. Self-Centered Impulsivity [Factor 2], and Coldheartedness [Factor 3]).

Results indicated the overall model was statistically significant, $\lambda = .67$, $F(1, 52) = 2.95$, $p = .01$, $\eta = .35$. Follow-up one-way ANOVA's revealed several significant differences on the content scale Self-Centered Impulsivity (Factor 1) between violent and non-violent offenders, specifically in the subscales Rebellious Nonconformity, $F(1, 52) = 12.69$, $p < .001$, $\eta = .20$, Carefree Nonplanfulness, $F(1, 52) = 7.37$, $p = .01$, $\eta = .12$; and Coldheartedness, $F(1, 52) = 4.83$, $p = .03$, $\eta = .09$. Machiavellian Egocentricity, also a subscale of Self-Centered Impulsivity (Factor 2), approached significance, $F(1, 52) = 3.65$, $p = .06$, $\eta = .07$. In all instances, the *t-scores* of each subscale in violent offender profile ($M = 78.67$, $SD = 11.45$; $M = 61.60$, $SD = 12.10$; $M = 49.27$, $SD = 9.17$; and $M = 66.70$, $SD = 11.64$, respectively) surpassed those found in the profile of non-violent female offenders ($M = 67.00$, $SD = 12.57$; $M = 53.83$, $SD = 7.89$; $M = 44.33$, $SD = 6.76$;

and $M= 61.46$, $SD= 7.51$, respectively). A visual description of the PPI-R clinical profiles of both violent and non-violent offenders is depicted in Figure 1 below.

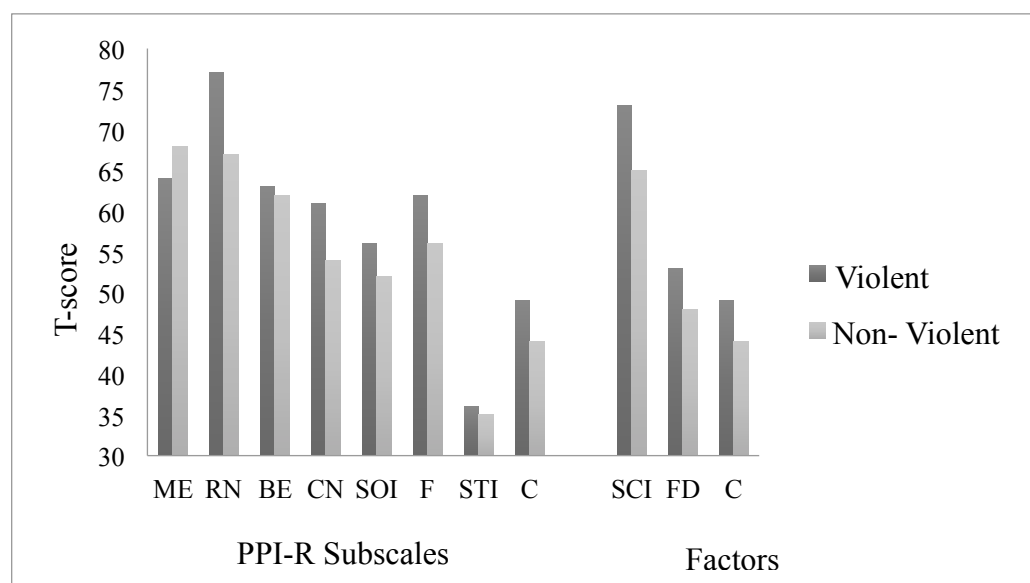


Figure 1: Psychopathy clinical profiles by offender type

Note: ME= Machiavellian Egocentricity; RN= Rebellious Nonconformity; BE= Blame Externalization; CN= Carefree Nonplanfulness; SOI= Social Influence; C= Coldheartedness [also Factor 3]; SCI= Self-Centered Impulsivity [Factor2]; FD= Fearless Dominance [Factor 1]; *= t -scores at or above 65 fall in the clinically elevated range; ** t -scores in the 60-64 range are considered subclinical

Assessing the relationship between relational aggression (IAS-A/IAS-T), antisocial behaviours (STAB), and psychopathic traits (PPI-R) by offender type: Correlations

Thus far, the results reported above describe the relationship between study IV's and DV's individually. Further investigated was the relationship between study IV's and DV's collectively. To this end, Pearson bivariate correlations were conducted to examine potential relationships between the total scores and subscales of the IAS-A, IAS-T, STAB, and the PPI-R. To reiterate, levels of relational aggression perpetration and victimization were determined based on total IAS-A and IAS-T scores, respectively, and are reflective of the grouping variables used for previous and subsequent analyses. Therefore, correlation coefficients related to these relationships are excluded, as they are redundant.

Violent offenders. Several significant relationships were observed across measures amongst violent female offenders (see Table 6 for correlation coefficients). In regards to relationally aggressive behaviours (i.e., social exclusion, malicious humour, and guilt induction, IAS-A), the use of Guilt Induction was significantly related to Factor 2: Self-Centered Impulsivity. Within Factor 2, Guilt Induction was significantly related to Machiavellian Egocentricity. PPI-R Total score and the Social Influence subscale of Factor 1 (Fearless Dominance) were also significantly correlated with Guilt Induction. In addition to the observed relationships between psychopathic traits and guilt induction, was the positive correlation of Machiavellian Egocentricity (Factor 1) with the use of Malicious Humour.

As expected, relationally aggressive behaviours correlated with relational aggression victimization (IAS-T), overall and by subscale. The IAS-A Total score was significant across all subscales of the IAS-T (i.e., Social Exclusion, Malicious Humour, and Guilt Induction), as well as with the IAS-T Total score. The IAS-A Social Exclusion and Malicious Humour subscales were also significant across each subscale of the IAS-T (i.e., Social Exclusion, Malicious Humour, and Guilt Induction); however, Guilt Induction yielded no significant relationships across IAS-T subscales. Finally, no significant correlations were observed between the subtypes of antisocial behaviour (i.e., physical, social, or rule-breaking) and either relational aggression perpetration (IAS-A) or relational aggression victimization (IAS-T).

Table 6:
Bivariate correlations in violent offenders by measure

Measures	Indirect Aggression Scale – Aggressor Version				Subtypes of Antisocial Behaviour Questionnaire		
	Total	Social Exclusion	Malicious Humour	Guilt Induction	Physical Aggression	Social Aggression	Rule Breaking
PPI-R Total	.32	.17	.30	.44*	.35	.47**	.54**
PPI-R Self-Centered Impulsivity (Factor 2)	.33	.21	.34	.37*	.43*	.55**	.58**
PPI-R Coldheartedness (Factor 3)	.22	.19	.16	.26	.39*	.23	.13
PPI-R Social Influence	.23	.10	.18	.44*	.22	.30	.35
PPI-R Machiavellian Egocentricity	.36	.17	.37*	.49**	.31	.43*	.48**
PPI-R Carefree Nonplanfulness	.10	.08	.08	.11	.44*	.39*	.39*
IAS-T Total	.46*	.47**	.42*	.29	.06	.25	.09
IAS-T Social Exclusion	.44*	.46*	.38*	.30	.30	.28	.09
IAS-T Malicious Humour	.48**	.47**	.48**	.29	.14	.26	.14
IAS-T Guilt Induction	.38*	.40*	.34*	.24	-.01	.13	-.01
STAB Physical Aggression	.14	.09	.13	.18	--	.81**	.82**
STAB Social Aggression	.23	.18	.21	.24	.81**	--	.86**
STAB Rule Breaking	.10	.00	.11	.18	.82**	.86**	--

Note: scales that did not reach statistical significances on any measure were excluded

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$, -- denotes correlations of 1

Across the primary forms of antisocial behaviour (i.e., physical, social, and rule-breaking), as measured by the STAB, a similar pattern of significance was observed, with four psychopathic traits emerging as positively correlated. Physical Aggression was shown to significantly correlate with both Factor 2: Self-Centered Impulsivity and Factor 3: Coldheartedness. Carefree Nonplanfulness, also a subscale of Factor 2, was correlated with physical aggression. The Social Aggression and Rule-Breaking subscales also found Factor 2 and Carefree Nonplanfulness, as well as Machiavellian Egocentricity and PPI-R Total, to be significantly related. There were no significant relationship between STAB and IAS-T variables. Although noted, correlations between STAB variables will not be discussed.

Non-violent offenders. As with violent offenders, several significant correlations were observed; however, fewer relationships reached significance when compared to violent offenders (see Table 7 for correlation coefficients). In non-violent offenders, no psychopathic traits (PPI-R) were significantly related to relational aggression perpetration (IAS-A). The relationship between relational aggression perpetration and victimization was only significant between IAS-A Malicious Humour Subscale and the IAS-T Social Exclusion subscale. Similarly, IAS-A Guilt

Induction demonstrated a positive correlation with IAS-T Malicious Humour. Although no relationships emerged between psychopathic traits and relational aggression victimization, all relational aggression perpetration scales were significantly related to the Social Aggression scale of the STAB.

Table 7:

Bivariate correlations in non-violent offenders by measure

	Indirect Aggression Scale – Aggressor Version				Subtypes of Antisocial Behaviour Questionnaire		
	Total	Social Exclusion	Malicious Humour	Guilt Induction	Physical Aggression	Social Aggression	Rule Breaking
PPI-R Total	-.05	-.02	-.12	.03	.18	.02	.48*
PPI-R Self-Centered Impulsivity (Factor 2)	.11	.11	.05	.19	.48*	.29	.69**
PPI-R Coldheartedness (Factor 3)	.35	.323	.37	.27	.21	.42*	.09
PPI-R Stress Immunity	-.35	-.30	-.39	-.27	-.59**	-.29	-.30
PPI-R Machiavellian Egocentricity	.27	.27	.20	.30	.56	.46*	.55**
PPI-R Rebellious Nonconformity	-.16	-.12	-.24	-.09	.17	-.06	.53**
PPI-R Carefree Nonplanfulness	.27	.28	.30	.18	.29	.19	.43*
IAS-T Total	.38	.30	.38	.40	.53**	.41	.29
IAS-T Social Exclusion	.40	.34	.43*	.48	.56**	.40	.22
IAS-T Malicious Humour	.38	.31	.36	.41*	.45*	.39	.25
IAS-T Guilt Induction	.28	.20	.27	.38	.54**	.40	.41*
STAB Physical Aggression	.40	.27	.43*	.45*	-	.51*	.64**
STAB Social Aggression	.76**	.66**	.75*	.75**	.51*	-	.27
STAB Rule Breaking	.26	.19	.17	.42	.64**	.27	-

Note: scales that did not reach statistical significances on any measure were excluded

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$, -- denotes correlations of 1

The STAB scales were found to differentially relate to psychopathic traits across subtype. Physical aggression positively correlated with Factor 2: Self-Centered Impulsivity and negatively correlated with Stress Immunity, whereas Social Aggression positively correlated with both Factor 3: Coldheartedness and Machiavellian Egocentricity. It was Rule-Breaking wherein the strongest relationship with psychopathic traits, namely Factor 2: Self-Centered Impulsivity, was observed. Within Factor 2, rule breaking behaviours were significantly related to Machiavellian Egocentricity, Rebellious Nonconformity, and Carefree Nonplanfulness. PPI-R Total was also found to be significant. On the Physical Aggression subtype, the IAS-T Total score and subscales were positively correlated, suggesting there is a relationship between physical aggression and various forms of relational aggression victimization. Only the IAS-T Guilt

Induction was related to Rule-Breaking behaviours. Social Aggression was not related to any forms of relational aggression victimization.

The ability of the DV's to predict relationally aggressive perpetration and victimization, as well as the likelihood of a relationally aggressive individual exhibiting antisocial behaviours or displaying psychopathic traits is of added importance. To explore such, the following subsection utilized regression analyses to extract data regarding the predictive abilities of the study DV's.

The predictive qualities of relational aggression perpetration and victimization, antisocial behaviours, and psychopathic traits

To address research questions 1 and 2, that query whether relational aggression, specifically the tactics utilized to perpetrate such (RQ 1), antisocial behaviours, and psychopathic traits (RQ 2) could predict offence (i.e., violent vs. non-violent offending) behaviours a binary logistic regression was employed. For this reason, the ability of study DV's to predict the two aforementioned IV's are the central focus of the following analyses. To explore how the use of relational aggression perpetration, antisocial behaviours, and psychopathic traits may predict violent or non-violent offending, a binary logistic regression was utilized. As relational aggression victimization was incorporated in subsequent analyses, a separate analysis with victimization as the DV was not conducted. Exploration of the ability of relational aggression victimization, select antisocial behaviours, and psychopathic traits, a multiple to predict relational aggression perpetration, a hierarchical regression analyses was employed.

Predicting violent or non-violent offending. A binary logistic regression was performed to examine the ability of relational aggression perpetration, engagement in antisocial behaviours (i.e., physical aggression and rule-breaking), and/or psychopathic traits to predict

violent or non-violent offending. To predict offender type, individual relationally aggressive tactics (i.e., the social exclusion, malicious humour, and guilt induction subscales of the IAS-A), the physical aggression and rule-breaking subscales of the STAB, and the three psychopathic personality factors (i.e., Fearless Dominance, Self-Centered Impulsivity, and Coldheartedness) were entered as predictors using a forced entry method. The model coded violent offenders as 1 and non-violent as 0.

The logistic model was statistically significant, $X^2(7) = 17.44, p = .03$, explaining 37.0% (Nagelkerke R^2) of the variance in offender type, and correctly classifying 77.8% of cases. The Wald criterion indicated that only the PPI-R Factor 2: Self-Centered Impulsivity made a significant contribution to prediction ($p = .01$); the remaining variables were not significant (all $p > .05$). Violent offenders were more likely to exhibit the Self-Centered Impulsivity (PPI-R Factor 2) than non-violent offenders (OR = 1.05). The above findings indicate that increasing traits associated with self-centered impulsivity (e.g., rebellious non-conformity), by one unit, was associated with an increase in violent offending. Test statistics are reported in Table 8.

Table 8

Summary of Logistic Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Offence Type

Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	Wald χ^2	<i>p</i>	e^B (Odds Ratio)
IAS-Aggressor Social Exclusion	-.02	.10	.03	.86	.98
IAS-Aggressor Malicious Humour	.05	.11	.26	.61	1.06
IAS-Aggressor Guilt Induction	-.10	.10	.98	.32	.91
PPI-R Self-Centered Impulsivity	.05	.02	6.11	.01*	1.05
PPI-R Coldheartedness	.07	.06	1.44	.23	1.08
PPI-R Fearless Dominance	.02	.02	1.19	.28	1.02
STAB Physical Aggression	.06	.06	.98	.32	1.06
STAB Rule Breaking	-.08	.07	1.31	.25	.92
Constant	-12.31				
Model χ^2	17.74				
<i>df</i>	8				
% violent offenders	53.6				

* $p < .05$

Predicting relational aggression perpetration from relational aggression victimization, psychopathic traits, and antisocial behaviour. A two stage multiple hierarchical regression analyses was performed to predict relational aggression perpetration (IAS-A) from a self-reported history of victimization by way of relational aggression (IAS-T), Fearless Dominance (PPI-R Factor 1), Self-Centered Impulsivity (PPI-R Factor 2), and Coldheartedness (PPI-R Factor 3), physical aggression (STAB), and rule breaking (STAB). Relational aggression perpetration was entered as the DV. Victimization was entered into stage one, using the forced entry method. It was entered first as previous research suggests such a history often results in perpetration (e.g., Crick & Bigbee, 1998). Stage 2 included the remaining variables, analyzed using the stepwise method, as they are exploratory. Psychopathic personality

traits were entered first, as it is reasonable that personality traits, being stable, would have a greater influence on our behaviour. Regression statistics are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Predicting Relational Aggression Perpetration

Variable	<i>b</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>p</i>
Model 1				
Constant	32.14	7.43		< .001
Victimization (IAS-T Total)	.33	.10	.41	.001
Model 2				
Constant	9.16	11.98		.45
Victimization (IAS-T Total)	.33	.10	.41	.002
PPI-R Coldheartedness	.74	.31	.28	.02

Note. $R^2 = .17$ for Step 1: $\Delta R^2 = .22$ for Step 2 ($ps < .002$).

Stage 1 of the multiple hierarchical regression revealed that victimization by way of relational aggression contributed significantly to the regression model, $F(1, 55) = 10.82$, $p < .002$) and accounted for 17% of the variance in relational aggression perpetration. Introducing the psychopathic trait Coldheartedness (PPI-R Factor 3), explained an additional 22% of the variation with the change in R^2 being significant, $F(2, 55) = 8.73$, $p < .001$. Fearless Dominance (PPI-R Factor 1), Self-Centered Impulsivity (PPI-R Factor 2), physical aggression (STAB), and rule breaking (STAB) did not significantly predict relational aggression perpetration when all variables were included (stage 2). Together, the two IV's accounted for 39% of the variance in relational aggression perpetration, suggesting that a history of relational aggression victimization and a characterological tendency toward callousness predicted the use of relational aggression perpetration in female offenders. However, there remained a substantial portion of the variance in relational aggression perpetration that remained unaccounted for by the above model.

Summary of chapter

Results from the previous analyses indicated that the occurrence of relational aggression perpetration and victimization did not differ according to offence type or self-reported perpetration or victimization. Differences in demographic (e.g., age, ethnicity, etc.) and offence characteristics (e.g., incarcerations to date) across participants were also non-significant across levels of perpetration or victimization. In the way of antisocial behaviour, the women disclosed engaging in physical aggression, social aggression, and rule breaking, as well as harbouring several psychopathic traits. Correlational data supported the existence of a series of significant relationships between IV's to the extent relational aggression perpetration and offence could be predicted by including relational aggression perpetration tactics and psychopathic traits. Despite a lack of significance, all participants included in the sample confirmed that they had experienced victimization by way of relationally aggressive tactics. Some participants also acknowledged engaging in relational aggression perpetration.

Overall, the quantitative results of the current study above indicated that relational aggression occurs within female offender institutions and on women units, and that female offenders exhibit psychopathic traits and antisocial behaviour. However, should one rely solely on the former quantitative results, the full extent to which relational aggression perpetration and victimization is woven into the social networks and experiences of the women would likely be underestimated. Furthermore, the quantitative data lacks the descriptive ability to fully understand the psychopathic traits amongst female offenders. To address the limitations presented by purely quantitative data, the next chapter delivers an integrated analysis of participants disclosures of relationally aggressive behaviour and victimization, as well as their reported antisocial behaviour and individual psychopathic traits.

Chapter 4: An Integrated Description of Relational Aggression, Antisocial Behaviour, and Psychopathy in Female Offenders

The interview responses provided by the women in the current study are largely supportive of the quantitative results reported in Chapter 3. The findings described herein serve to elaborate on their experiences of relational and physical aggression, as well as their observations of female interpersonal relationships, generally and while incarcerated. The information derived from semi-structured qualitative interviewing allowed the author to delve into the mechanisms of female aggression (perpetration behaviour and victimization), as well as provide additional information regarding displays of antisocial behaviour and psychopathic traits amongst female offenders.

To best represent the experiences of incarcerated female offenders, the data extracted from the interviews were integrated into the quantitative results, organized by dependent variables. To reiterate, relational aggression perpetration and victimization (as measured by the IAS-A and IAS-T) mean comparisons and associations are reported first, followed by antisocial behaviour (as measured by the STAB), and psychopathic personality traits (as measured by the PPI-R), respectively. The means of all measures, by offender type, are presented in Tables 10, 11, and 12, corresponding to their respective variables (see below).

To effectively integrate both quantitative and qualitative data, the following subsections are presented in the following manner. First, the sample characteristics of each dependent variable (i.e., relational aggression perpetration and victimization, antisocial behaviours, and psychopathy) were compared to those of their normative sample and previous literature by converting all obtained scores to *z-scores*. Differences of ≥ 1.98 SD above the mean were considered significantly different (Field, 2013). Next, frequency data and the results of parametric (i.e., MANOVA) and non-parametric (i.e., Chi-square) statistical tests of associations

(Chapter 3) were integrated with qualitative data obtained during semi-structured interviewing. With the intention of providing a clear and concise delivery of the following integrated results, quantitative results (i.e., test statistics) obtained via chi-square and multivariate analyses (MANOVA), previously reported in Chapter 3, will not be repeated here in their entirety, rather they will be summarized throughout the integrated results described herein.

Relational aggression in female offenders

Relational aggression acts as the primary variable of inquiry in the current study. Below, Table 10 reports the mean scores on measures of relational aggression victimization and perpetration. Total scores, as well as subscale scores, indicate the existence of relational aggression within the relationships of participants. An examination of the extent to which relational aggression exists within an incarceration setting and the manner in which it manifests is described both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Table 10

Means & Standard deviations by Indirect Aggression Scale version and offence type

Measures	Total Sample (N=56)		Violent (n=30)		Non-Violent (n=24)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Indirect Aggression Scale- Aggressor						
Social Exclusion	21.93	7.77	22.83	8.06	21.04	7.74
Guilt Induction	13.25	4.83	13.63	4.84	12.79	5.04
Malicious Humour	20.23	7.43	21.23	7.90	19.04	7.09
Total	55.41	18.35	57.70	18.65	52.88	18.75
Indirect Aggression Scale - Target						
Social Exclusion	27.84	9.26	27.57	9.68	28.46	9.18
Guilt Induction	18.04	5.94	17.57	5.52	18.96	6.56
Malicious Humour	25.16	8.71	25.10	8.50	25.54	9.40
Total	71.04	22.88	70.23	22.69	72.95	24.12

Means relative to established norms. Given the majority of studies examining relational aggression were conducted with university students, it was hypothesized that female offenders would exhibit higher rates of relationally aggressive behaviours or more frequent experiences of victimization. However, the current study yielded total mean scores of $M= 55.41$, $SD= 18.35$ on the IAS-A, which are comparable to the means of previous studies using university samples. For example, Garcia-Sanono, Salguero, and Fernandez-Berrocal (2016) reported $M= 39.99$, $SD= 10.03$, while Leenaars and Lester (2011) reported $M= 47.5$ and an $SD= 20.20$. Subscales for the IAS-A, Social Exclusion, $M=15.87$, $SD= 4.07$, Malicious Humour, $M=20.23$, $SD= 7.43$, and the Guilt Induction, $M=13.25$, $SD= 4.83$, were also comparable to published works (e.g., $M= 21.93$, $SD= 7.77$; Forrest et al., 2005; $M=17.80$, $SD= 5.11$, Forrest et al., 2005; $M=11.09$, and $SD= 3.23.93$, Warren & Clarbourn, 2009, respectively). Similarly, female offender total scores, on the target version of the IAS-T, $M= 71.04$, $SD= 22.88$, do not exceed the mean scores of Canadian university students, $M= 45.50$, $SD= 16.90$, as reported by Leenaars and Lester (2011), nor did target version subscales (Social Exclusion: $M= 27.84$, $SD= 9.26$; Malicious Humour: $M= 25.16$, $SD= 8.71$; and Guilt Induction: $M= 18.04$, $SD= 5.94$; see Forrest et al., 2005).

Relational aggression in the current sample. Specific to the current study, all participants confirmed they had been involved, as perpetrators, victims, or both, in relational aggression over the past 12 months, as measured by the IAS-A and the IAS-T. Specifically, 100% ($n=56$) of participants reported having been victimized, while 96% ($n= 54$) reported being both victims and perpetrators. In the current sample, 40% ($n= 12$) of violent female offenders fell within the high relational aggression perpetration group, while 30% ($n= 9$) fell within the low perpetration group, and the remaining 30% ($n= 9$) fell within the mid-range. Relatively equal

numbers of non-violent offenders fell within each group: 29% ($n=7$), 38% ($n=9$), and 33% ($n=8$) within the high, low, and mid-range groups, respectively. Based on level of relational aggression victimization, 33% ($n=10$) of violent offenders were identified as the high victimization group, 30% ($n=9$) fell in the mid-range group, and 37% ($n=11$) fell in the low victimization group. Similarly, 38% ($n=9$), 33% ($n=8$), and 29% ($n=7$) of non-violent offenders fell in the high, mid-range, and low victimization groups. Overall, 34% ($n=9$) of participants ranked high in both perpetration and victimization. Chi-square analyses (see Chapter 3 for test statistics) indicated no statistical difference between violent and non-violent offenders regarding frequency of perpetration and experiences of victimization.

With the above in mind, a thorough investigation of how women self-identified their behaviour and experiences within a correctional setting was warranted. To obtain such information, as described in Chapter 2 (Methods), a subset of the sample volunteered to undergo additional interviewing. Their responses were integrated with quantitative data to provide a broader picture of relational aggression and anger in women.

Relational aggression in incarcerated female relationships. Consistent with the above results, of the IAS-A and IAS-T scores of the 16 women who were interviewed, identified as victims (100%, $n=16$), perpetrators (94%, $n=15$), with most identifying as both (94%, $n=15$). When participants were asked how women behave toward others when angry, 94%, ($n=15$) described relationally aggressive behaviour as women's primary expression of anger. For example, Kelly, a violent offender in the mid-range relational aggression perpetration group who reported high levels of victimization, asserted, "[It's] just in their nature". Particularly when angry, women were described by interview participants as "conniving" (56%, $n=9$), "vindictive/malicious" (50%, $n=8$), and "manipulative" (44%, $n=7$). In this regard, the majority

described other women as being “catty” (28%, $n=4$), “two-faced” (22%, $n=4$), and “backstabbing one another” (31%, $n=5$).

The women suggested that the aforementioned attributes did not only emerge when angry, but were inherent in their platonic female relationships. The majority of participants (88%, $n=14$) described their close friendships with women as oscillating, where interactional styles are often duplicitous and harmful juxtaposed with a supportive and caring stance toward their female friends. For example, Sonya, a non-violent offender in the high aggressor and mid-range victimization groups, explained that women often “talk about each other, gossip, use each other but [there is a] closeness there”. Jamie agreed, explaining that even though she considers her female friends to be “family”, “they are not really loyal”. Appropriately, given the above description, Tanya, a violent offender in the mid-range perpetration and low victimization group, labeled women as being “frenemies”, whereby their relationships are positive and supportive until a perceived violation, on the part of one or multiple members of the group, occurs. An evaluation of interview transcripts indicated a relationship violation (e.g., betraying trust, breaking a promise, or hanging out with another girl more than them) appeared to evoke anger, prompting the “malicious”, “manipulative”, and “catty” behaviour indicated above.

Vicki, a non-violent offender in the mid-range perpetration and low victimization groups, described a scenario to illustrate the dynamics of female relations. Her depiction revealed a jealous and sometimes possessive association with peers, whereby loyalty and affiliations are of the utmost importance. She explained, “Three girls are always really close; no one can come between them. [If] someone [is] trying to come between them, [one will get] jealous of the relationship, feel like she’s trying to push [the other] out. Girls will [then] gang up on each other; want to take their ‘spot’ back”. According to respondents, when relationships are ruptured

by relational aggression, one member of the dyad or group often reconciles with the other(s), seeking forgiveness or offering pardon for a perceived friendship or group violation. Participants described the intentional or forced estrangement and/or feud between group members as temporary and brief in duration, as the victim is often frantic or strongly desires to re-enter the larger group. To demonstrate, Vicki simply stated, “One [i.e., woman] always goes back”; however, social consequences and strain apparently remain.

Although six participants’ interviews ended early because of institutional operations, not allowing them to respond to the question “*How often do you observe relationally aggressive behaviours*”, 78% ($n=12$) of those who were able to complete the interview indicated that they frequently observed relationally aggressive behaviours in the community and in the correctional facilities where they found themselves. Alternatively, 25% ($n=4$) noted physical aggression was more common. Andrea, a violent offender in the low relational aggression perpetration and mid-range victimization group, explained that she observes these behaviours frequently “on the inside” and stated it “happens right out in the open”. In her opinion, overt displays of relationally aggressive behaviours occur frequently in incarceration settings, in front of staff, and communal areas. Marcy, a violent offender in the low perpetration and low victimization groups, also specified that in custodial settings, the level of relationally aggressive behaviour observed fluctuates depending on who is housed on the unit. According to the offenders, 56% of individuals indicated that victims are often targeted because their peers perceive the other as “weak” and “vulnerable” or due to the nature of their crimes. By way of example, in an incarceration setting any crime involving children are considered particularly heinous and, therefore, contribute to an individual being targeted/victimized. Darcie stated that she was targeted because her charges included vehicular manslaughter of a child.

Use and benefits of relational aggression. As reported in Chapter 3, non-parametric tests of association (i.e., *chi-square*) and an examination of the relationship between victimization via relational aggression tactics (i.e., MANOVA) revealed that violent and non-violent offenders perpetrated and experienced social exclusion, malicious humour, and guilt induction to the same extent. Their descriptions are consistent with behaviours defined as “relationally aggressive” by previous literature (e.g., Crick et al., 1995). By way of extension, the disclosures of the women interviewed, regardless of whether they were violent or non-violent offenders, contained descriptions of multiple instances of reactive and proactive social attacks. Most salient were experiences of social manipulation and coercion for personal and/or material gain (88%, $n=14$), social exclusion (75%, $n=12$), gossiping and rumour spreading with the intention of harming the reputation of an other (81%, $n=13$), use of malicious humour/name calling (63%, $n=10$), and to a lesser extent, guilt induction (31%, $n=5$). Fifty-six percent of participants also described these behaviours as occurring simultaneously and/or consecutively. By way of example, Darcie stated, “if they [women] get angry...they talk s*** about someone else, pass notes, get people on their side, tell the others what the ‘bad person did to outcast her’”. In her example, gossiping/rumour spreading, social manipulation, and social exclusion occur simultaneously. The women identified their motivation for the above listed behaviours as jealousy (63%, $n=10$), competition (43%, $n=7$), social status (38%, $n=6$), and access to resources such as food and hygiene canteen items (32%, $n=5$).

During the integration of the quantitative and qualitative data of the present study, a model emerged depicting the interrelationship between relationally aggressive tactics that were employed to establish and maintain social hierarchies, within and outside correctional institutions. Figure 2, shown below, was developed to illustrate the interrelation between

relational aggression and social hierarchies, as conceptualized by this author. Each component of the proposed model is discussed by level in a bottom-up progression.

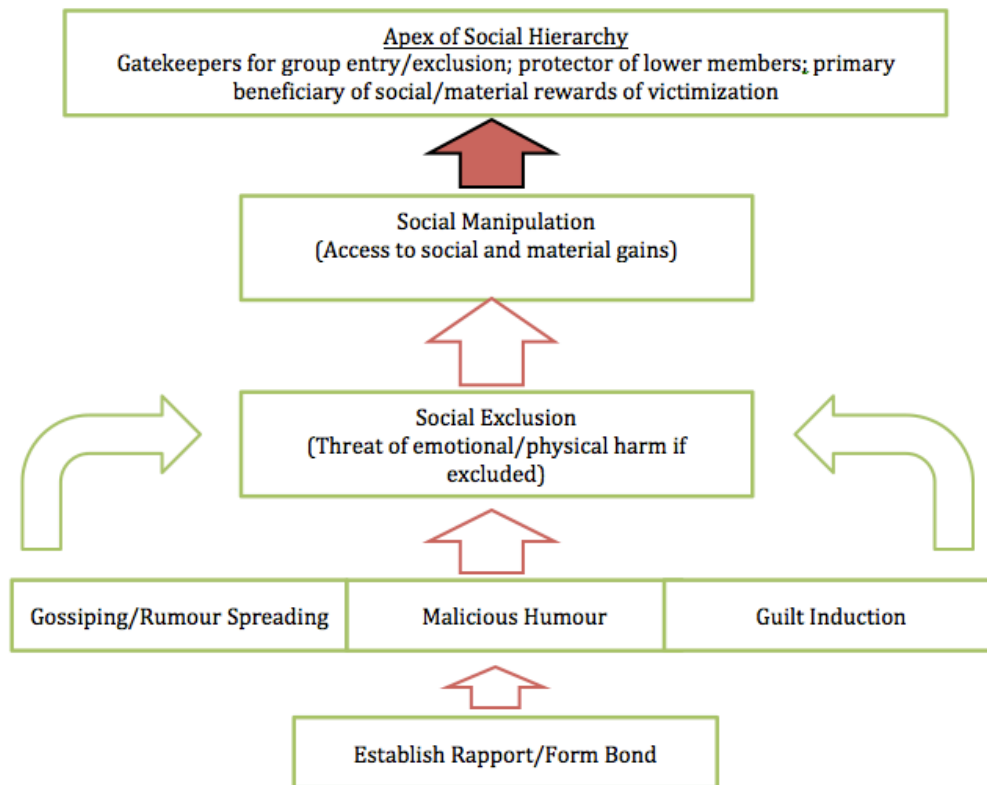


Figure 2: Interrelationship between relationally aggressive tactics to establish and maintain social hierarchies

Level 1- Establish rapport/form bond: “[there] for emotional support, someone to vent to, have fun with, to laugh and cry with”. The starting point of the victimization cycle appears to emerge from the establishment of positive rapport and the formation of attachment bonds between two women or, more often, the larger group. Marcy and Jamie, violent offenders in the low perpetration and mid-range victimization groups, described female relationships as being somewhat of a sisterhood, whereby attachment is high and members of their friend group are “considered family”. Participants reported having longstanding friendships with a select few

women (e.g., 10+ years; 44%, $n=7$). An additional 13% ($n=2$) described having close female friendships established more recently.

The women described the positive aspects of female relationships that encouraged them to engage in and establish bonds with one another. Participants felt other women provide support to one another by acting as an ally, adviser, and sounding board for everyday occurrences. Samantha, a violent offender in the high relational aggression perpetration and low victimization groups, indicated that female friends are “[there] for emotional support, someone to vent to, have fun with, to laugh, and cry with”. Similarly Sonya indicated that women should be “trustworthy, helpful, friendly, help you complete stuff, bring stuff to the table, [and] don’t want to fix you. They [female friend] have your back no matter what”.

Many of the women (44%, $n=7$) described finding solace and protection within their friendships/groups, both emotionally and physically, as well as gaining access to desired goods and materials. Once rapport is established and a bond formed, the other individual comes to value their relationship and experience the benefits described above. It is also likely that an individual has shared personal details about themselves throughout the bonding process. As a result, they may leave themselves vulnerable to emotional and social harm by others.

Level 2- Emotional and social repression: (“The Shift”): “[They] are more like Frenemies”. With the value of the relationship in mind and having gained personal information about the other, the perpetrator is now in a position where harm can be inflicted. Should conflict or anger emerge within a friendship dyad or a group, attempts to harm and/or repress another individual via gossiping/rumour spreading, malicious humour, and guilt induction often emerge. Alicia reported observing all three behaviours, stating, “females criticize how other people look, poke fun at who they are, and gossip about other people’s behaviour”. Specific to rumour

spreading and gossiping, Darcie explained that women inappropriately share information given to them in confidence and “talk s*** about someone else, if it benefits them”. Tanya shared a salient experience, where another woman who was angry with her started a rumour about her mistreating her child and made a false report to the Children’s Aid Society. As a result, her child was apparently taken from her care. The actions of her perpetrator damaged her most cherished relationship and, ultimately, caused harm to her social network. Samantha also commented that women “tamper with relationships” through “spreading rumours” and “bring things up from the past that they might not be proud of”.

In the way of malicious humour and guilt induction, participants also reported that women were more verbal, utilizing “name calling” more frequently than their male counterparts. Sonya commented that “the difference between flattery and a compliment is motive”, meaning other women often said seemingly nice statements but were in fact “making fun of you”. In most cases, the “joke”, as it were, is known to other members of the group and used as a way to humiliate or alienate the target. Darcie stated that the group may “tease with other girls [about the victim] but get quiet when she comes up”. It appears, based on the responses of the women interviewed, that gossiping/humour spreading, malicious humour, and guilt induction act as a means to initiate social exclusion or the threat thereof.

Level 3- Social Exclusion: “It is very important to belong in jail... you don’t go through being picked on or excluded, don’t have to wait for hygiene products, [and] people are nice to you”. Being in the “in-group” is of particular importance to female offenders as it offers a variety of benefits that minimize the intense and disheartening environmental effects these women endure, whereas exclusion from such groups could be devastating physically, emotionally, and psychologically. Sonya explained, “It is very important to belong in jail... you

don't go through being picked on or excluded, don't have to wait for hygiene products, [and] people are nice to you". Similarly, Darcie added, particularly within a custodial setting, "it [belonging to a group] is really important for safety; without [it] you risk the chance of being hurt or beat up". In the way of material benefits, Vicki stated she often purchased desired items for her friends such as alcohol or drugs, and, occasionally, gave her friends money.

Stephanie indicated that aggressors in female correctional facilities will "campaign with someone to bring them to your side or exclude someone". Jamie recalled an instance when several women in a social group no longer "liked her". She explained, "...girls told everyone to ignore me and act like I didn't exist". Marcy indicated that excluded woman could only re-enter the social group if "the leader" condones her re-entry. She emphasized, "The bully picks the clique. If they aren't down with someone, you aren't either". In other words, if the individual(s) situated at the top of the social hierarchy do not approve of or dislike an individual, she must be excluded. Failure to adhere to the rules of group and/or unit would reportedly result in "consequences" determined by whoever governs the "in-group". Sonya stated, "You have to act in a certain way but when you mess up you have to do something (unspecified)". Respondents also explained they can also be targeted if they attempt to protect or "stick up for" themselves against those with greater status on the social hierarchy. Darcie explained that, as a consequence of trying to assert her boundaries with other offenders, she was "bullied and beaten up". To avoid penalties in the future, she indicated that now she "goes with the crowd". As evidenced by not only their desire to be included but also the fear associated with being excluded, it appears the women become more susceptible to manipulation and coercion as they attempt to avoid being banished from the greater social group.

Level 4- Social manipulation: “women might say ‘if you do it [something illegal or aggressive] you can come hang out with us’”. Most salient in the reports made by participants was their descriptions of women, particularly those high in social status, utilizing their position to meet their own needs and repress others. Martha, who describes herself as “the boss” of her unit, explained that it was necessary for people to “earn their stripes” to be accepted as part of the group, emphasizing she “[does] not let in people who don’t deserve it”. She indicated that her peers knew it was their responsibility to do her bidding and handle conflicts, under her direction, admitting, she will “leave others to do my dirty work”. When queried about how she assigns such roles, she replied, “Get the weak ones to do what you want”. She noted that if she cared about another inmate, she would “warn them about how to protect themselves”, at times providing such protection herself. In some cases, the potential of being accepted to the group and being offered the rewards of such is enough to motivate an “outsider” to engage in illegal or aggressive behaviour under the direction of the “leader” or other high status members. Stephanie explained that, “women might say ‘if you do it [something illegal or aggressive] you can come hang out with us’”.

As alluded to previously, a primary method of social manipulation was the use of, or threat of, social exclusion. Darcie explained that, during a previous incarceration, her roommate, whom she identified as being the “ring leader” of their range, targeted her because she was low on the “totem pole” (i.e., bottom of the social hierarchy) and had been caught associating with an ostracized member of the unit. She recalled that after the other women excluded her, she befriended another woman who was also “high on the totem pole” who offered her protection but she “had to do something to get back in the group”, namely, get tobacco products for the group. If she were found in possession she would likely be reprimanded. Darcie added that she was told

to “throw someone under the bus who didn’t know better”, referring to blaming another woman on the range for having the cigarettes. Interview analysis revealed that if any member of the group violates the rules of the group, she is at risk of exclusion and often manipulated by her peers.

Model Summary. Taken together, interview results demonstrate that once rapport has been established, an emotional bond has been formed, and/or the values/benefits of the group have become apparent (e.g., protection while incarcerated), repression tactics are initiated. Gossiping/rumour spreading, malicious humour, and use of emotional guilt appear to be employed to harm peers and implicitly maintain the threat of exclusion from the greater social group, which ultimately allows for the use of social manipulation to further the seemingly malicious goals of those with higher social standing and influence over the group. Members appear to continue using relationally aggressive tactics to reassert their dominance over whomever is below them on the hierarchy and repress their targets from emotional, social, and/or physical retaliation.

To successfully discuss relational aggression in female offenders, and subsequently elaborate on the above model, other facets of offender behaviour and traits must be considered. Therefore, antisocial behaviour and psychopathic traits were examined to develop a more complete picture of the female offenders. Exploration of the experiences of women in custody via data integration achieved said goal.

Antisocial behaviour in female offenders

As described in previous literature (see Chapter 1), antisocial behaviour is identified more frequently among those in custody (e.g., Edens et al., 2015). To examine the antisocial behaviours of the women, namely physical aggression, social aggression, and patterns of rule

breaking, descriptive quantitative data and interview data were integrated. Their response pattern on a measure of antisocial behaviour (i.e., STAB) provided information regarding antisocial behaviour compared to non-offender samples. All means and standard deviations relevant to STAB scores by offence type are reported below in Table 11.

Table 11:

Means & Standard deviations by Subtypes of Aggressive Behaviour subscales and offence type

Measures	Total Sample (N=56)		Violent (n=30)		Non-Violent (n=24)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Subtypes of Aggressive Behaviour						
Physical Aggression	30.98	11.24	33.93	12.36	27.21	8.99
Social Aggression	29.16	9.64	31.10	10.91	26.67	8.98
Rule Breaking	26.51	9.91	28.60	11.57	23.83	7.20
Total	86.66	28.15	93.63	32.79	77.71	19.26

Means relative to previous norms. The mean total scores of antisocial behaviour in the current study, $M = 86.66$, $SD = 28.15$, as measured by the STAB, exceeded that of other published research utilizing a university sample (e.g., $M = 45.50$, $SD = 16.90$; Park, Schwarts, Lee, Kim, & Rodriquez, 2013). Alternatively, mean scores were comparable between the current sample of female offenders, $M = 30.98$, $SD = 11.24$ and both male, $M = 23.06$, $SD = 6.60$, and female, $M = 20.36$, $SD = 6.09$, adjudicated sample in regards to physical aggression (Burt & Donnellan, 2009). Social aggression scores were also similar between this female offender sample, $M = 29.16$, $SD = 9.64$, and to those of adjudicated males, $M = 21.88$, $SD = 5.38$, and females, $M = 22.70$, $SD = 4.75$ (Burt & Donnellan, 2009). It is in rule-breaking behaviour where this sample reported higher mean scores, $M = 26.51$, $SD = 9.91$, than other adjudicated males, $M = 15.29$, $SD = 4.12$, and females, $M = 13.67$, $SD = 3.24$, in the norming sample (Burt & Donnellan, 2009). Collectively, women offenders exhibited more antisocial behaviours than non-offender samples, more frequently engaged in rule breaking but exhibited similar levels of aggression as other female and male offenders.

Antisocial behaviour in the current sample. Female offenders in the current study reported being charged and/or convicted of both physical (e.g., simple assault) and rule breaking behaviours (e.g., break-and-enter), two of the three subscales of the STAB, the questionnaire used to quantify antisocial behaviour. Specifically, the self-reported charges of the women were simple assault (41%), murder/attempted murder (13%), break-and-enter (11%), theft/fraud (20%), drug-related charges (4%), immigration issues (6%), breaches of probation (2%), and other offences such as trespassing (4%). The women did not report charges related to social aggression, the third subscale of STAB, as would be expected given there exists no punishable laws related to socially aggressive behaviour. Collapsing the above offences into a proportion of the sample is congruent with the three subscales of the STAB is of added value. In the present study, 54% ($n=29$) of offences are considered physically aggressive, antisocial displays and 46% ($n=25$) are considered antisocial behaviour in the form of rule breaking. To elaborate on the above findings, the results of MANOVA analyses (see Chapter 3 for test statistics) indicate that individuals who were high perpetrators also reported being high in social aggression, which acts to support of perpetration classifications assigned in the current study. Results also indicated that regardless of level of perpetration, the women reported similar physically aggressive and rule breaking behaviour.

The above reported descriptive and multivariate results depict the coexistence of physical and social aggression within a female offender sample, regardless of offence type. The women's descriptions of antisocial and aggressive behaviours in custody conformed to the quantitative findings related to subtypes of antisocial behaviour, with 81% of participants reporting observing and/or engaging in both physical and relational aggression. Furthermore, the women interviewed in the current study repeatedly endorsed the premise that relational aggression was often the

precursor to physical violence. For example, Marcy described one scenario where she physically assaulted another inmate because she “was saying stuff [i.e., gossiping]” about her. Similarly, Vicki admitted that if someone were to “make up stories” or “lie” about her, she would want to retaliate physically but would resist because of the potential for institutional punishment. She explained, “[I would] damage them physically, with no hesitation but you wouldn’t [be physical] in jail because you wouldn’t want to be in the hole [i.e., solitary confinement]”. Tera concurred, stating, “Don’t want to hit people or get hurt, [so] use words to get to them”.

When the possibility of legal ramifications was excluded from the discussion, some participants felt that physical aggression was preferred over relational aggression. Several women were explicit that physical aggression forces an abrupt end to conflict and, typically, signifies a conclusion to the fight or disagreement. Samantha explained there were “no benefits to being relationally aggressive. It is not worth it; the other girl will just retaliate. [It is] better to get in a fist fight and get it over with”. Stephanie echoed this sentiment, stating, “I’d rather get punched in the face; just get it over with”. However, it was common for participants to explain the impact of relational aggression as having a more devastating effect than physical aggression, whereby participants felt the emotional wounds and social estrangement forced upon them by their peers was experienced long after the initial incident occurred. As Tera stated, “emotional pain is worse and stays with you longer than physical”, to which Melanie concurred, adding, “[relational aggression] is more damaging than anything”. Although physical aggression and rule breaking appeared to resolve conflict and accomplish goals in a timely manner, relational aggression was reported to have greater long-term negative impacts on the individual targeted. Therefore, an investigation into the presence of more severe socially and emotionally destructive traits of perpetrators is warranted.

Psychopathic Traits in Female Offenders

To determine whether the women included in the current study hold traits and/or attitudes consistent with psychopathic offenders, the presence of psychopathic traits were explored with the intention of investigating whether female offenders exhibit such traits and if the women in the current sample described experiences, as perpetrators or victims, consistent with individuals who are identified as psychopathic. The former investigation was undertaken via integration of quantitative and qualitative data. Mean comparisons, clinical profiling, and tests of associations were performed utilizing the means and standard deviations reported in Table 12.

Table 12

Means & Standard deviations by Psychopathic Personality Inventory- Revised subscales by offence type

Measures	Total Sample (N=56)		Violent (n=30)		Non-Violent (n=24)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Psychopathic Personality Inventory-R						
Social Influence	51.82	8.56	52.87	7.92	50.42	9.52
Fearlessness	37.63	9.54	39.50	10.55	35.25	8.02
Stress Immunity	29.43	6.60	29.60	6.46	29.00	7.13
Machiavellian Egocentricity	52.82	10.49	55.30	12.06	49.75	7.85
Rebellious Nonconformity	43.45	9.00	46.83	7.86	38.88	8.61
Blame Externalization	44.75	6.40	45.43	5.89	44.38	7.00
Carefree Nonplanfulness	40.80	9.47	43.56	10.42	36.75	6.75
Coldheartedness*	30.75	7.08	32.47	7.78	28.17	5.63
Fearless Dominance*	118.88	18.65	121.97	18.80	114.67	18.59
Self-Centered Impulsivity*	181.82	24.22	191.13	24.29	169.75	5.63
Total Score	375.89	36.69	389.67	36.35	356.96	29.35

* Indicates factors composed of PPI-R subscales; coldheartedness subscale is both a factor and a subscale of the PPI-R

Means relative to previous norms. Relative to women in community/university samples ($M = 261.67$, $SD = 29.83$; Warren & Clarbour, 2009), PPI-R total mean scores of female offenders in the current sample were higher, $M = 375.89$, $SD = 36.69$. Additionally, female offenders scored higher on Self-Centered Impulsivity (Factor 2), $M = 181.82$, $SD = 24.22$, ($M = 133.12$, $SD = 18.74$; Warren & Clarbour, 2009). The remaining subscale and factor scores (i.e., Fearless Dominance [Factor 1] and Coldheartedness [Factor 3]) were comparable to previous

published research (see Anestis et al., 2011; Warren & Clarbourn, 2009). Similar to community samples, female offender mean PPI-R Total scores, $M = 375.89$, $SD = 36.69$, surpassed those of male offenders in the norming sample, $M = 283.86$, $SD = 28.99$ (Lilienfeld & Widows, 2005) and were comparable to that of recently published studies (e.g., $M = 310.67$, $SD = 37.29$, Hughes et al., 2013). PPI-R factor scores could not be compared for offender samples because they have gone unreported in previous literature.

Between subscales, the current sample of female offenders surpassed those of the norming sample and previous literature using offender samples on the Machiavellian Egocentricity, $M = 52.82$, $SD = 10.49$, Rebellious Non-conformity subscale, $M = 43.45$, $SD = 9.00$, and Stress Immunity $M = 29.43$, $SD = 6.60$. Hughes et al. (2013) reported Machiavellian Egocentricity scores of $M = 37.60$, $SD = 8.28$, within a male incarcerated sample. Furthermore, Lilienfeld and Widows (2005) reported Rebellious Non-Conformity, $M = 27.26$, $SD = 6.84$, and Stress Immunity scores of $M = 12.86$, $SD = 6.50$. Other PPI-R subscales were comparable relative to previously published research (see Hughes et al., 2013 and Lilienfeld & Widows, 2005). Overall, female offenders logically surpassed community samples in regards to overall presence of psychopathic traits and, to some extent, the scores of male offenders. Alternatively, an examination of individual subscales showed no statistical differences.

Psychopathic traits in the current sample. All participants disclosed some traits, attitudes, and/or beliefs synonymous with psychopathic traits, as measured by the PPI-R. Quantitative results examining the association between IV's, as measured using a single 2x3 MANOVA (see Chapter 3 for test statistics) indicated that regardless of level of perpetration, victimization, or offence type, women consistently endorsed the psychopathic traits indicated below.

Based on the level of endorsement, it appears that, across the total sample, women self-reported moderate levels of behaviour and beliefs consistent with the subscales of Social Influence, Fearlessness, Stress Immunity, Machiavellian Egocentricity, Rebellious Non-Conformity, Coldheartedness, and Blame Externalization. A moderate level of endorsement in these domains suggest that the women in the present study self-identified as having a tendency toward rule breaking and rebelliousness, frequently using manipulation and ruthlessness in social situations, and indicated they perceive themselves in a grandiose, narcissistic manner, harbouring a certain lack of anticipatory anxiety. Their endorsement patterns also suggest a tendency toward blaming others for their perceived struggles and a propensity toward viewing themselves as victims of circumstance and disruptions in the appropriate experiencing of guilt, empathy, and integrity in social relationships.

Similarly, the clinical profiles of violent and non-violent offenders, based on *t*-score elevations, were relatively consistent. More specifically, clinically significant elevations were observed on the PPI-R factor score Self-Centered Impulsivity, which includes the subscales Machiavellian Egocentricity, Rebellious Nonconformity, Blame Externalization, and Carefree Nonplanfulness. When the clinical profiles of violent and non-violent female offenders were examined for statistical differences using a one-way MANOVA (see Chapter 3 for test statistics), results indicated that violent offenders exhibited the same clinically elevated scales; however, the violent offenders endorsed them to a greater degree in comparison to non-violent offenders.

Although the questions posed during interviewing were designed to extract information regarding expressions of aggression in women while incarcerated and less to gather information pertaining to psychopathic traits, their descriptions of their behaviour revealed some aspects that also appear in those exhibiting psychopathic traits. Most salient were their reports of social

manipulation and coercion of others and a certain level of callousness toward their peers, both behavioural tendencies consistent with the Machiavellian Egocentricity and Coldheartedness scales of the PPI-R. In fact, approximately 88% ($n = 14$) of the current sample identified exhibiting or observing manipulative and coercive behaviour with the intention of harming others and advancing their own social status and access to resources.

Alicia described women as “shape shifters” who falsely represent themselves as “good friends” with the target “to get what they want out of you”. She added, “I used to cause a lot of trouble out of boredom; sometimes [I] make stuff up to start problems”. Samantha also admitted to employing social manipulation to coerce other women to verbally or socially attack other women when she had an “indirect problem with someone (i.e., no apparent cause to dislike them)”. She explained she occasionally offered them desired materials (e.g., canteen items) and, like Alicia, sometimes engaged in such behaviours for her own entertainment. Specific to offending behaviour, Martha admitted she has even used social manipulation and coercion to get her victims to revoke complaints they have made against her, explaining, “I’ve had people withdraw charges just by me sending someone to get tell them to withdraw”.

Also notable were participants’ reports of being able to have skilful social control and influence over others, while simultaneously exhibiting difficulties expressing empathy and integrity in their social relationships, consistent with both the Social Influence and Callousness subscales of the PPI-R. Approximately 50% of participants described engaging in relational aggression perpetration during interviewing, but did not identify themselves as being highly relationally aggressive on the IAS-A. As measured by the IAS-T, participants were more likely to identify themselves as being victimized more frequently. Such a response pattern is consistent

with the Blame Externalization subscale of the PPI-R, which suggests they are more inclined to blame others for their misbehaviour.

Summary of chapter

The integrated results contained herein confirm the presence of relationally aggressive perpetration and victimization within an incarcerated female sample. During the interviews, participants described that the frequency and severity of relational aggression negatively impact all women, regardless of offence type, and influenced unit dynamics. Also emerging is how the establishment of relationships between women allowed for relationally aggressive tactics to be employed to threaten group inclusion and social manipulation. Compounding and worsening their experiences are their self-reported antisocial behaviours and individual psychopathic traits. Taken together, the results contained in Chapter 3 and 4 provide insight into how relational aggression, antisocial behaviour, and psychopathic traits are exhibited, simultaneously and individually, and how they can be utilized to strategically influence others.

Chapter 5: Empirical Conceptualization and Clinical Conclusions

In recent years, there has been a national increase in the number of women incarcerated in Canada (Maruschak & Bonczar, 2013) and a growing interest in female specific manifestations of aggression (e.g., McAndrew, 2014), particularly relational forms (e.g., Rivera-Maestre, 2010), antisocial behaviours (e.g., Zakaria et al., 2013), and psychopathy (e.g., Wynn et al., 2012). Therefore, the present study sought to explore and better understand these variables amongst violent and non-violent female offenders. Employing a mixed-method design, the current investigation extracted information regarding the role and use of relationally aggressive tactics, the lived experiences of relational aggression perpetration and victimization, and the manifestation of antisociality and psychopathy in 56 Canadian female offenders.

The concluding chapter provides an empirically and clinically relevant discussion of the findings, responding to each of the three research questions posed at the onset of the project. More specifically, this study confirms the presence and use of relational aggression in Ontario female correctional institutions and identifies how it relates to offence type and antisocial behaviour (RQ 1). Second, it establishes the relationship between psychopathic traits, antisocial behaviour, and relational aggression in both violent and non-violent offenders (RQ 2). Third, it outlines the lived experience of the women as it pertains to relational aggression and psychopathy while incarcerated (RQ 3). Emerging from the analyses is a descriptive model of relational aggression in female correctional institutions. Finally, the chapter closes with recommendations and considerations for future research, as well as clinical and institutional implications.

Summary of Major Findings

As intended, the results of the present study extend existing literature and provide insight into the unique, lived experiences of the participants as it pertains to relational aggression perpetration and victimization, antisocial behaviour in women, and female psychopathic traits. Quantitative analyses (i.e., non-parametric tests of association, correlational, multivariate, and regression tests) indicated that, regardless of demographic characteristics, offence type, or classification of relational aggression perpetration or victimization (i.e., high, mid-range, or low), all women reported being victimized and/or being perpetrators themselves. Additionally, they exhibited some level or type of antisocial behaviour and possessed psychopathic traits and/or attitudes/beliefs. The aforementioned was supported by qualitative results.

Based on the information obtained during interviewing, combined with quantitative data, a descriptive model of relational aggression in female offenders as a way to establish social hierarchies was constructed. The five-stage model depicts a process whereby, once strong emotional bonds have been formed, relationally aggressive tactics are initiated to harm and/or suppress another member of the dyad/group and threatened group inclusion, access to resources, and protection. In an attempt to avoid social exclusion, and the consequences of such, individuals lower in social status become vulnerable to social manipulation and coercion by those higher in social status. Within this context, dominant, high-ranking individuals are allotted ample opportunities to take advantage of and harm other members of a lower ranking, while maintaining power, control, and a certain level of desirability from their peers. Psychopathic traits emerged as contributing to relational aggression perpetration. To create a lens through which to interpret the women's self-reported behaviours and observations, offender profiles for the general sample, as well as the violent and non-violent participants were developed.

Offender Profile of Study Participants

The general demographic profile of the participants was largely consistent with the most recent available data pertaining to female offenders in Canada (Mahony, 2011). The relatively congruent demographic configuration of the current sample with other nationally incarcerated samples allowed for the current study to draw conclusions about the reported beliefs/attitudes, behaviours, and experiences disclosed by the women. Furthermore, the findings suggest the applicability of the proposed model, introduced in Chapter 4 and further described herein, to a broader sample of women in custodial settings.

Alternatively, the offence characteristics of the current sample revealed a more diverse picture, whereby the profile of female offenders is often depicted as having fewer concurrent charges (Thomas, 2004), being less likely to recidivate (Carrington, 2007), and less likely to be considered persistent offenders (i.e., committing crimes before and after turning 18; Carrington, 2007). In the current sample, the women had an older age of first offence, a higher number of incarcerations, and a higher number of concurrent charges. More specifically, within the total sample, the participants averaged 34 years of age, were repeat offenders ($\approx 72\%$), and, on average, had obtained their first criminal charge at around 21 years of age, with approximately seven incarcerations to date. Their profile suggests the current participant profiles are more consistent with individuals referred to as life-course persistent, a term coined by Moffitt (1993), meaning they have more substantial and long-term criminal histories, often offending into adulthood and having committed more severe offences, including violent acts (Farrington, 2003; Moffitt, 1993).

In the way of offences committed, the current sample mirrored previous national data reported by both Statistics Canada (2008) and Correctional Service of Canada (Statistics Canada, 2016), with women most often being charged with Assault, Theft Under \$5,000, and administrative violations. The current study participants reported similar constellations of charges, whereby Theft/Fraud (20%), Break and Enter/Trespassing (21%), and, most notably, Assault (41%) and Homicide/Attempted Homicide (13%), were reported most frequently. Furthermore, nearly 54% of the women included in the present study were serving time for a violent offence. These proportions are similar to Statistic Canada's recent national survey (see Statistics Canada, 2016) and provide support for the significant increase in adult violent female offending reported by previous researchers (e.g., Kubiak et al., 2013; Mahony, 2011).

Among the variables measured, the only significant difference between violent and non-violent offenders was regarding age, with violent offenders being slightly younger than non-violent. In a previous study by Hanson (1998), youthfulness was identified as being a significant predictor of violent offending, peaking in late adolescence and tapering off in the later adult years (i.e., 19-22; Blokland & Palmen, 2012; Kong & AuCoin, 2008). Conversely, the current sample's violent participants were an average age of ≈ 30 years old. Although the present study does not offer longitudinal data, given the current study only accessed adult facilities (18+), their age suggests their crimes were committed in adulthood, and as such, they are well suited to the life-course persistent profile, described above. Several factors are supportive of the above assertion that the current sample depicts a life-course persistent offender. First, the women endorsed engaging in all facets of antisocial behaviour namely physical aggression, social aggression, and, to a greater extent, rule breaking behaviour (see Chapter 4). Second, the majority of participants were recruited from maximum-security units.

Based on CSC Security Classification and Penitentiary Placement Guidelines (CSC, 2017), individuals who are placed in maximum security pose a high risk to public safety, have had significant difficulties with institutional adjustment, require a very structured environment under direct supervision, have previously been uncooperative with staff, and have a greater propensity toward violence. With these factors in mind, it is reasonable to conclude that many participants of the present study have long been involved in an antisocial lifestyle and exhibit violent tendencies resulting in criminal charges. In conjunction with research indicating that violent acts perpetrated by women are often unreported, lead to few criminal convictions (e.g., Kubiak et al., 2013), and the perception that women are less aggressive than men (e.g., Forrest et al., 2005), researchers, and those tasked with the care and management of offenders, must consider all facets of female aggression, particularly those that veer away from the physical.

Anger and the Presence of Relational Aggression

It has been well established in previous literature that women exhibit anger and aggression differently from their male counterparts, often manifested in more covert displays (Daniels et al., 2010; Moroshan et al., 2009). Relational aggression was reported by the participants as being the preferred form of anger expression amongst women, consistent with previous research (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Forrest et al., 2005; McAndrew 2014; Trammell, 2009). The women who participated in the current study emphasized that when women were angry they became manipulative, vindictive, “catty”, “backstabbing”, and “two-faced” but that these behaviours were not limited to anger alone.

The present investigation revealed that all women were victimized via relational aggression, were perpetrators, or both. Exposure to and victimization did not discriminate by age, ethnicity, academic achievement, relationship status, or the criminal offences that brought

them into custody (i.e., offence type). Being a perpetrator of relational aggression and/or engaging in physical displays of aggression also did not buffer the individual against being victimized. Furthermore, relationally aggressive behaviours were apparently utilized against individuals outside of their social group, acquaintances, and/or strangers, but were also directed toward those whom they considered friends. It has been purported by previous researchers that relationally aggressive behaviours may lessen in adulthood (e.g., Ostrov & Keating, 2004); however, it is apparent given the results of the present study that they persist and can cause significant harm to those in the current incarceration sample.

Although levels of relational aggression were comparable to the general population, there existed a noticeable difference between the endorsement of relational aggression victimization and perpetration on quantitative measures versus the extent to which they were described during interviewing. Their self-reported scores on both measures of relational aggression, were quite moderate and, interpreted alone, would have minimized the magnitude of its impact on women and how frequently it occurs while incarcerated. Interview data demonstrated the full extent to which relational aggression exists within female custodial settings and social structures. For example, Martha, who fell in the low relational aggression perpetration group, revealed during interviewing that she frequently engaged in both relationally and physically aggressive behaviours, was often socially manipulative of others, and used coercion in custody to meet her own needs. Had only her quantitative results been considered, valuable information about her social world while incarcerated, and subsequently the world of her peers, would have gone undiscovered.

The above inconsistency may be explained by a lack of insight into their behaviour, as found by Goldweber and Cauffman (2010) when they tested female juvenile offenders for relationally aggressive behaviour. They found that the girls had a tendency to underreport their behaviour. It is equally likely that the women are naïve about what constitutes relational aggression altogether and simply could not label their behaviours, resorting to words such as “catty” and “frenemies”. Regardless, it can be used effectively to advance one’s own interests and as a means to establish social hierarchies while incarcerated.

Use of Relational Aggression in Female Correctional Facilities: A Descriptive Model of Social Hierarchies via Relational Aggression Perpetration

The results of the current study culminate in a firm understanding that relational aggression is a regular occurrence within an incarceration setting, can be effectively utilized to meet one’s social, emotional, and material needs, and plays a substantial role in the experiences of women outside and within correctional facilities. The women unanimously identified relational aggression as a harmful, insidious act that successfully hindered their well-being, socially and emotionally. Based on interview data, relational aggression is seemingly an inherent part of the female interpersonal experience, accompanied by a certain level of acceptance that encountering victimization and relationally aggressive interactional styles is the norm. Problematic is that compliance with bullying behaviour often results in it being reinforced, resulting in an increase in relationally aggressive behaviours (Harvey, Treadway, & Heames, 2007). Participants described engaging in both proactive/instrumental (i.e., initiated to attain a desired goal or material) and reactive aggression (i.e., responding to own anger).

Most prominent in the women's descriptions of female relationships, generally and within a correctional setting, was the oscillating nature of female relationships, where "highs" are characterized as supportive, intimate, and protective, and "lows" by exclusion, manipulation, betrayal, and a general sense of being targeted by their peers. It is within these "lows" where relational aggression emerges, damaging targets/victims and boosting the power and control of perpetrators or "ring leaders", allotting them the ability to reap rewards from the group they dominate.

Socially, individuals learn the rules of engagement (i.e., how to interact with other women so as to remain a member) through observation and by referencing their own interpersonal interactions (i.e., verbal and non-verbal communication with peers; Bandura, 1977); relational aggression perpetration and victimization are no exception (Low, Polanin, & Espelage, 2013). Ultimately, having been victimized by the group previously, promoting reliance on social learning of perpetration strategies and avoidance tactics (e.g., adherence to known group rules) in an attempt to evade re-victimization. A social culture, characterized by relational aggression, has also been shown to promote the development and maintenance of social hierarchies and support a cycle of perpetration and victimization (Pilch & Turska, 2014).

To illustrate the above phenomenon in incarcerated female offenders, the model proposed herein was constructed with the intention of demonstrating the methods of social dominance and suppression that are utilized to establish and maintain social hierarchies. To date, the majority of research (e.g., Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Daniels et al., 2010; Goldweber & Cauffman, 2012) has looked at specific relationally aggressive behaviours (e.g., gossiping, social exclusion, etc.) individually or as multiple manifestations of the same behaviour but has yet to clearly delineate how and when these tactics emerge within social groups or between individuals.

The model detailed below provides support for the argument that relationally aggressive behaviours do not necessarily emerge simultaneously; rather, they evolve, and in the current sample, worsen throughout the course of a relationship or incarceration. Additionally, the progression through each stage appears to serve a specific purpose, linking the previous behaviour to the next and further advancing the objectives of those holding social control and power. The following descriptive model consists of five levels in succession that operates in a cyclical manner, whereby the “highs” turn to “lows” and proactive aggression prompts reactive responses. The following descriptive model integrates information obtained regarding antisocial behaviour and psychopathy, as well as discusses potential outcomes of the established hierarchy.

Level 1- Establish Rapport/Form Bond. Acting as the first level of the model is the establishment of positive rapport between members, which emerges as a result of emotional support and feelings of closeness. In general, the women described an ideal friendship as being characterized by intricate social and emotional connections, enhancing the relationship. Many of the participants reported positive experiences within their friendships, wherein they provided stability in volatile or vulnerable situations (e.g., having someone to go to when having family problems), as well as joy and entertainment/recreation. At this level, personal information is shared between individuals or the larger group and desired materials are gained access to (e.g., shower items, food items, etc.).

Level 1 is highly consistent with Miller’s Relational Theory (1979), supported by the work of Trammell (2009), which purports that women place high value on interpersonal relationships, where the quality of these relationships becomes enmeshed with their feelings of self-worth and esteem. As a result, positive benefits (e.g., increased engagement in facility programming; Clone & DeHart, 2014) occur, while simultaneously making them vulnerable to

exploitation, manipulation, and emotional harm as they try to attain and maintain these relationships. Consistent with the disclosures of study participants, their desire to form bonds with other women, particularly in the harsh, isolating environment of correctional facilities (Severence, 2005), the aforementioned risks drastically increase. Failure to establish relationships in an incarceration setting has been shown to increase feelings of anger, perpetuate antisocial and aggressive behaviour, evoke memories of former victimization experiences and ultimately leaves them feeling more disconnected (Moffitt et al., 2001). It is through the bond formed and the desire to remain included that prompts the emergence of relationally aggressive behaviour.

Level 2- Emotional and Social Repression (“The Shift”). Once rapport is established, a bond is secured, and investment in said relationship is high, a potential perpetrator can now inflict harm through damage to individual or group relations and feelings of self-worth of the victim, in accordance with Relational Theory (Miller, 1979). As reported by study participants and described in previous literature (e.g., Odgers & Moretti, 2002), shortly after establishing the bonds described in Level 1, the quality of the relationship becomes unstable, meaning intermitted periods of amicable and positive relations are followed by disruptive and hurtful acts.

In the current model, this transition of primarily positive interactions to vacillating between positive and negative is referred to as “the shift”. The shift appears to occur due to, but not limited to, perceived slights or disrespect, jealousy on the part of the perpetrator, and/or an increase in competition for resources. Should a rupture occur, actual or perceived by the perpetrator, the initiation of relationally aggressive tactics occurs (Covington, 2007). Based on the descriptions offered by study participants, relational aggression was primarily displayed first through gossiping, rumour spreading, use of malicious humour, and use of guilt induction to

harm, manipulate, and emotionally and behaviourally repress the other. The use of these tactics did not differ between violent and non-violent offenders. It appears that these relationally aggressive tactics, both overt and covert, are interrelated and occur simultaneously and/or consecutively. Women appear to have used the personal information of others, given to them during the “high” points of the relationship, where the target felt safe and cared for.

Alluded to previously, perpetrators of relational aggression felt that emotional harm was the best way to hurt the other person, as it plays on the high value placed on female relationships (Bjorkqvist et al., 1992) and the benefits of being a member of a close-knit group (e.g., emotional support). Whether it be to achieve a high social status, to dominate another member of the group, or to obtain valuable goods (e.g., canteen items), the women strategically carried out behaviours aimed to emotionally harm another individual and pressure them into social submission. However, if relational tactics are unsuccessful in achieving the perpetrators needs, physical attacks are often threatened or initiated. Contrary to perpetrators, victims appear to favour physical altercations as opposed to experiencing repeated victimization by way of relational aggression.

Level two is the first where the influence of psychopathic traits emerged relative to relational aggression perpetration. Specifically, correlational analyses revealed that there exists a moderate relationship between guilt induction and malicious humour with the psychopathic traits of Machiavellian Egocentricity and Social Influence (across violent and non-violent offenders). Their endorsement pattern suggests they perceive themselves as being able to influence others easily and use their confidence and charm to cultivate a positive impression on others, despite their ulterior, often malicious and exploitive, motives/intentions. Guilt induction and malicious humour are often utilized to influence the decisions of others, put excessive pressure on targets,

use of one's own feelings instrumentally to coerce targets, and to promote feelings of shame and social confusion in targets. The latter feelings are highly associated with compliance, emotional suppression, anger, and aggression (see Stuewig, Tangney, Heigel, Harty, & McCloskey, 2010, for a review), which have been previously identified as common goals of relationally aggressive perpetrators.

It could be postulated that women high in social influence and machiavellianism may play on the stereotypes of females as passive, lacking aggression, weak, and "sweet" (Miller, 2000), which allows them to perpetrate in a covert manner, increasing the likelihood that these behaviours remain underreported and unpunished by institutional staff, as reported by interview participants. Overall, the complex nature of their relationships leaves the women feeling vulnerable, hesitant, and defensive, while they await the next social and emotional attack from their peers, whom they are seemingly desperate to remain affiliated with. If ruptures to the relationship occur and remain unaddressed and unresolved, an individual may be socially excluded or threats to social inclusion may be made.

Level 3- Social Exclusion. Based on the results of the current study, social exclusion or threat thereof appears to be the most detrimental to their well-being and the most feared social outcome. In the general population, in-group and out-group interactional differences are prominent, whereby those in the in-group are likely to show unfavourable attitudes to behaviours toward a member of an out-group (Lee, Pratto, & Johnson, 2011). The same phenomenon was observed amongst the female inmates who participated in the current sample. Being a member of the in-group, allowed the individual to seek emotional refuge from the harsh, rigid environment in prisons, as well as gain access to desired materials, and physical protection.

Alternatively, being cast out from the greater group can put the individual at risk of emotional and physical harm, often evoking feelings of depression and anxiety in the excluded, isolated woman, and limits access to resources (e.g., hygiene products; Marshall et al., 2015). Congruent with the concept of pseudofamilies amongst incarcerated women (Giallombardo, 1966; Wulf-Ladden, 2016), each woman appears to hold a particular role and may be invited into the group by members, or the leader, or may have been allotted the privilege to enter due to a trait, behaviour, or materials that suit the group. To avoid being targeted or excluded, the members strongly adhere to group rules (e.g., who and who not to associate with), taking their cues from those in higher positions on the social hierarchy, who are likely to exhibit the psychopathic traits of Social Influence and Machiavellian Egocentricity described above. Some rules identified by the women were to only associate with approved peers, comply with the demands of individuals with greater standing in the hierarchy, follow directions, and remain loyal to the other members of the in-group to avoid attacks, covert and/or overt, by the individual higher up in the social standings. She added that it is easier to “follow the group” than risk being attacked in the future.

Consistent with the descriptions of the women, previous research suggests that when the threat of social exclusion exists, women change their behavioural presentation or pattern to avoid such (Benenson, Markovits, Thompson, & Wrangham, 2011). In incarcerated settings, they may become more passive or they become aggressive toward lower members to maintain their own position or increase status. As noted previously, women who exhibit proactive relational aggression fare better as part of the larger group as opposed to those who only engage in reactive aggression (Stoltz, Cillessen, van den Berg, & Gommans, 2016). If one’s social group utilizes relational aggression frequently to suppress others, engaging in these tactics allow the member to

remain a part of the desired social group (Roland, 2002). In a way, a woman's display of proactive aggression appears to be protective and adaptive, given an incarceration setting and the culture of their peers in said environment. Overall, a sense of loyalty and fear of mutual victimization appears to bond the women in lower ranks and the benefits supersede the costs. These findings have been confirmed by the results of this study and, subsequently, make way for social manipulation to become effective as members attempt to remain a part of the primary social group.

Level 4- Social Manipulation. As indicated above, the threat of future victimization and social exclusion allows those higher in the social hierarchy to effectively utilize manipulative and coercive strategies to secure their own needs, carry out illegal acts, procure contraband, and/or perpetrate violent or relationally aggressive acts on their behalf, congruent with Odgers and Moretti (2002). One woman, who referred to herself as “the boss”, talked about how she would “keep new inmates in line” and play other inmates on her unit against the others in order to get what she wanted. Although she reported using physical intimidation, occasionally, she more often utilized relationally aggressive tactics in order to intimidate, manipulate, and coerce “weaker” inmates into excluding other members and getting things she wanted such as food, amenities (e.g., shampoo, hair brush), and even drugs. Targets were often selected based on individual traits, such as emotional or physical fragility/vulnerability, immaturity, and/or arrogance.

As a result of the emotionally manipulative and exploitive behaviours of the “top dogs”, there appears to be a certain level of learned helplessness (Goetz & Dweck, 1980; Schäfer, Korn, Brodbeck, Wolke, & Schulz, 2005), where the experiencing of negative social consequences and/or relational victimization is inevitable. In the current study, feelings of helplessness are

frequently related to fear that their peers will treat them poorly, exclude them, and/or subject them to relational or physical retaliation if they do not comply with group rules (Pepler & Craig, 2000). Ultimately, it appears that they must rely on the larger social group, leaving them little options in the way of defying or resisting the directives of the leaders. Furthermore, members lower in the social hierarchy are left with few avenues to seek support as the relationally aggressive behaviours are not observable and only other members of the social hierarchy are privy to its presence.

The presence of psychopathic traits among female offenders is most apparent at this level and the one that follows. As similar traits being identified in social manipulation as well as in the maintenance of the highest social standing, a full description is provided in the following section. However, it remains valuable to note that the use of social manipulation, made easy by certain psychopathic traits, appears to be utilized most frequently by the individual at the top of the hierarchy, aiding her ability to maintain such role.

Level 5- Controlling and Maintaining Social Status. Level 5 acts as a culminating stage of all previous levels in the proposed model, exemplifying the confluence of all previously described behaviours and motivations to depict the power and dominance the woman residing at the apex of the social hierarchy wields. At this level, the leader becomes the gatekeeper for group entry/exclusion, the protector of lower members, and primary beneficiary of social and material rewards resulting from the victimization of others. Elements of social manipulation, coercion, and evidence of specific relationally aggressive tactics are possessed and perpetrated by the leader of the group. The use of isolation, devaluation, and emotional repression serve to assert and position themselves in these powerful, superior roles (Card et al., 2005).

Relational aggression has been found across various studies to be extremely effective in exerting social control over peers, altering social environments, and getting one's needs met while keeping perceived popularity intact (Pronk & Zimmer-Beck, 2010; Sijtsema, Veenstra, Lindenberg, & Salmivalli, 2009). That being said, although perceived popularity has greater associations with power and control, it does not necessarily relate to being liked by one's peers, as appears to be the case in correctional settings. Volk, Camilleri, Dane, and Marini (2012) indicate that primarily indirect forms of aggression are beneficial as they allows the leader or bully to maintain social control for a prolonged period of time, diminishing retaliation on the part of the leaders victims. It appears that engaging in relationally aggressive acts is almost necessary to establish and maintain one's self at the apex of the hierarchy, particularly within a correctional setting where physical acts are so closely monitored.

The relationally aggressive behaviours employed to assert power and dominance over peers in order to maintain one's status, achieve personal goals, and procure desired goods are consistent with psychopathic traits found in participants, resulting in disrupted, often antisocial, interpersonal interactions. The activation of the specific psychopathic traits observed within the context of developing social hierarchies are consistent with Cleckley's (1941) assertion that women are inclined to express their psychopathic traits within relationship, supported by Verona and Vitale (2006), and consistent with previous research indicating that bullying behaviour, like relational aggression, is positively correlated with psychopathy (Baughman, Dearing, Giammarco, & Vernon, 2012).

The emerging psychopathic traits in the current sample depict female offenders as holding anti-authority beliefs and attitudes and engaging in imprudent defiance of societal rules (PPI-R Rebellious Non-Conformity), as well as exhibiting difficulties with impulsive control and

failing to learn from previous mistakes (PPI-R Carefree Nonplanfulness). Previous research studies have also reported these traits, depicting some relationally aggressive women as being impulsive, defiant, and exhibiting a behavioural pattern whereby they violate the rights of others (e.g., Forouzan & Nicholls, 2015), also consistent with antisociality (e.g., Werner et al., 2015). Given that the sample is comprised of offenders, elevations on scales measuring psychopathic traits that best reflect antisocial traits are not surprising. Justifiably, the women are likely to carry any pre-existing antisocial traits/attitudes into a correctional setting, applying them to the broader social culture of the unit. To the benefit of those high in social status, the criminal thinking styles also exhibited by their peers are unlikely to be recognized as “red flags” for future victimization, as they might be to the average individual in society.

When clinical elevations are included, additional psychopathic traits emerged as significant. Salient were elevations that reflect a generally callous disposition (PPI-R Coldheartedness), as well as a machiavellian interpersonal style (PPI-R Machiavellian Egocentricity), a characterological tendency toward blame displacement (PPI-R Blame Externalization), and to a lesser extent, a general lack of anticipatory anxiety (PPI-R Fearlessness). These traits are consistent with previous research pertaining to relationally aggressive women (e.g., Harris et al., 2007; Savage, 2008).

Callousness, often identified as one of the defining features of psychopathy (e.g., Frick, Bodin, & Barry, 2000), is reflected in the tendency of the female offender participants to utilize relational aggression, and sometimes violence, to perpetrate against their peers with little regard for the harm their actions inflict (Kerig & Stellwagen, 2010; White et al., 2015). In the average individual, with intact empathy and perspective taking capabilities, causing emotional, social, and/or physical harm to another individual is likely to prompt an overwhelming, visceral and

emotional response (Hastings, Zahn-Waxler, & McShane, 2006); however, the same response is muted in callous individuals. For those atop the social hierarchy with a callous disposition, an avowed insensitivity and reported immunity to the plight of their peers is advantageous to meeting their own needs and keeping their peers emotionally and behaviourally suppressed.

The results of a multiple hierarchical regression analyses indicated that callousness and a history of relational aggression victimization significantly predicted relational aggression perpetration. As such, it is reasonable to conclude that callous female offenders with substantial histories of victimization are more likely to perpetrate in the same manner and, therefore, might be more likely to hold positions at the top of the social hierarchy. A way through which to view this association may be via the concept of acquired callousness (Kerig & Becker, 2010), which suggests that following repeated experiences of victimization an individual develops a callous-unemotional affective and interactional style to manage highly distressing situations, endure punishing environments, and to minimize the risk of future harm. Orsillo, Theodore-Oklata, Luterek, and Plumb (2007) argue that this process occurs through emotional numbing, that is often triggered during interpersonal traumas where trusted others are the betrayers (Kerig, Bennett, Thompson, & Becker, 2012). As is well established in previous literature, female offenders typically have longstanding histories of abuse and emotional harm that may be the underlying cause of callousness in the current sample. Relative to the descriptive model, if previously victimized women enter jail, wherein the risk of further relational and physical assaults are high and significant distress is likely to be experienced, a certain level of callousness and emotional numbing becomes firmly adaptive. Nonetheless, regardless of the origin of these traits, the current presentation of callousness remains useful in establishing hierarchies and asserting social dominance and control.

In addition to the presence of callousness, the parallel between individuals exhibiting higher levels of machiavellian traits, blame externalization, and relational aggression, aiding in one's rise to social dominance and status, is quite compelling. First, the duplicitous interactional style exhibited in those possessing machiavellian traits (Jones & Paulhus, 2009), is reflective of the vacillating, unstable relationships described as inherent in female relationships. Female perpetrators in platonic friendships and/or social groups may seem like caring, supportive individuals until the perpetrators needs or desires supersede what the relationship can offer them or they feel threatened by, jealous of another individual, or their access to desired goods is compromised. Furthermore, attributing blame to other individuals as opposed to their own behaviour also proves valuable within this model. Traditionally, blame externalization is conceptualized as resulting from anger and an avoidance of shame (e.g., Stuewig et al., 2010), whereby they displace blame onto others for their wrongdoings to avoid the associated negative consequences (Ahmed & Braithwaite, 2005; Stuewig, Tangney, Heigel, Harty, & McCloskey, 2010). Coupled with their callous and machiavellian proclivities, the individuals at the top of the hierarchy can use their charm, influence, and power to displace blame without protest from lower members. They can also engage these traits, as well as physical intimidation when necessary, to pressure others into taking the fall for their antisocial and, sometimes, illegal behaviour, within and outside correctional facilities.

Based on the above, it is reasonable to conclude that those residing at the top of the social hierarchy must exhibit a certain amount of social intelligence. Thorndike (1920), supported by Gardner (1993), defines social intelligence as the ability of an individual to comprehend, engage in, and regulate or govern, interpersonal interactions and systems. Individuals high in social intelligence are able to use the configuration of social settings and the values identified within to

manipulate their peers (Kafetsios, Nezlek, & Vassiou, 2011; Nagler, Reiter, Furtner, & Rauthmann, 2014), as was observed in the current sample. Therefore, it is clear by the above description of Level 5 that maintaining one's position in the social hierarchy is not easy and requires a certain level of coordination, calculation, and a willingness to harm others to achieve one's goals, regardless of risk to self.

Model Summary. Relational aggression was revealed as the most prominent form of aggression utilized and experienced by the women due to its elusive, covert nature, and the efficacy of its tactics to assert social dominance and control by undermining the value placed on interpersonal relationships. By combining questionnaire data and the disclosures of female participants during interviewing, a descriptive model was developed to illustrate how social hierarchies are established via relational aggression in a female incarceration sample. Comprised of five levels, this model provides a detailed description of the process individuals high in social status harm one another and manipulate them into submission via relationally aggressive tactics.

Previous research and established theoretical frameworks were consulted to provide validity to construction of all levels of the above descriptive model (e.g., Miller's Relational Theory). To this author's knowledge, the proposed descriptive model is the first of its kind to portray the mechanisms through which relational aggression tactics establish hierarchies amongst women, while also addressing the order in which more severe and damaging relational aggression tactics emerge. The model described herein spans the perpetration process beginning at group entry and ending with leadership maintenance, throughout which the presence of psychopathic traits were identified. Additionally, there were also differences in psychopathic traits between offender type, generally and clinically, associated with primary and secondary psychopathic traits and consistent with the Three-Factor Model of psychopathy.

Primary and Secondary Psychopathic Traits in Female Offenders: Applicability of the Three-Factor Model

Overall, the psychopathic traits that emerged as significant across the current sample of offenders are consistent with a Three-Factor Model of psychopathy (Cooke & Michie, 2001), reported as best reflecting psychopathy in women (e.g., Poy et al., 2014). To reiterate, the three factors in Cooke and Michie's model include: 1) Arrogant and Deceitful Interpersonal Style, 2) Deficient Affective Experience, and 3) Impulsive and Irresponsible Interpersonal Style. The female participants in the present study endorsed all factors to some degree.

First, Factor 1- Arrogant and Deceitful Interpersonal Style and Factor 3- Impulsive and Irresponsible Interpersonal Style is evident in the current sample based on general and clinical elevations on the PPI-R Factor Self-Centered Impulsivity and one aspect of the Fearless Dominance Factor of the PPI-R. Self-Centered Impulsivity and Fearless Dominance include the scales of Machiavellian Egocentricity, Rebellious Nonconformity, Rebellious Non-Conformity, Carefree Nonplanfulness, Blame Externalization, and Social Influence. More specifically, the above scales, in both the model and the measure, encompass the traits of grandiosity, glibness, and the use of conning/manipulative behaviours combined with a self-reported ability to establish dominance and effectively engage in social settings. These scales also encompass the impulsive, irresponsible, parasitic, and inclination toward boredom displayed in female psychopaths. Most notable is the consistency observed between the emergence of Factor 3- Deficient Affect Experience and the Coldheartedness Factor score of the PPI-R. Both factors include callousness, deficiencies in emphatic responding, and flat affect as core features (Cooke & Michie, 2001).

Within the current sample, these traits were observed more frequently in violent offenders, also consistent with previous research (e.g., Adebayo, Olawa, Ogunleye, & Ayeye, 2014; Hall, Benning, & Patrick, 2004). In fact, additional analyses exploring the degree to which relational aggression perpetration, antisocial behaviour, and psychopathic traits could predict violent or non-violent offending found that increases, albeit slight, in traits related to Self-Centered impulsivity increased the likelihood that an individual would perpetrate a violent offence. Based on the variables entered, Self-Centered Impulsivity explained 39% of the variance and its presence correctly classified violent offenders approximately 78% of the time. These findings support the above that suggests violence, poor planning, impulsivity, defiance of authority, and frequent use of manipulation tactics for personal gain are related. In regards to relational aggression, no statistically significant differences between offender types were observed; however, correlational data, referred to previously, does speak to a positive association between the variables. The lack of statistical significant between level of relational aggression perpetration and psychopathic traits is likely an artifact of the strategy used to classify individuals and should be considered when developing future studies aimed at examining this relationship.

Clinically, the constellations of psychopathic traits observed in the women were relatively similar between violent and non-violent offenders. In violent offenders, all four scales of the Self-Centered Impulsivity Factor were significant in the clinical or subclinical range, as well as fearless dominance of the Fearlessness scale. The only difference observed between offender types was the absence of Carefree Nonplanfulness and Fearless Dominance in non-violent women, confirmed by multivariate analyses. Statistically, Carefree Nonplanfulness and Rebellious Nonconformity differed between groups. This finding, again, is not particularly

surprising given these scales reflect a certain level of impulsivity, failure to learn from previous experience, and a general inability to regulate one's behaviour, traits frequently observed in violent offenders (Lang, Klinteberg, & Alm, 2002). Coldheartedness also differed but is irrelevant given it was not in the clinically significant range.

Based on the results of the current study, the suitability of primary and secondary psychopathy to female offenders remains convoluted, whereby arguments for both types of psychopathic traits are valid. As described in Chapter 1, primary psychopaths are individuals who organically lack the ability to process and experience emotions, are cold and callous in their interactions with others, and are seemingly unaffected by anxiety provoking situations or encounters (Falkenbach et al., 2015; Karpman, 1948). In some respects, the women presented in a similar manner. Coyne and Thomas (2008) are also of the opinion that women who perpetrate relational aggression best reflect primary psychopathy, evidenced by their use of manipulation, disregard for their well being of their peers, and a lack of emotional awareness. Furthermore, their calculated, controlled behavioural presentation is thought to provide additional evidence.

Alternatively, secondary psychopaths are more impulsive, destructive, and emotionally dysregulated, while still displaying impaired affective processing (Karpman, 1948; Miller & Luynam, 2015). These individuals are thought to develop psychopathic traits as a result of early life circumstances and socialization rather than because of an innate or neurological abnormality (Karpman, 1948). Based on the recurrent presence and influence of Self-Centered Impulsivity observed within the current sample, as well the use of physical aggression and substantial histories of victimization likely experienced by some of the women (Burt & Donnellan, 2008; Kerig & Becker, 2010), the argument for secondary psychopathy can also be made.

Perhaps the fact that behaviours and motivations consistent with prior conceptualizations of both primary and secondary psychopathy exist in the current sample, may be more reflective of their position in the social hierarchy or the extent to which they utilize relational aggression perpetration rather than general, categorical differences. As an example, those at the top of the hierarchy may be more likely to display primary psychopathic traits, while those of lower status, more likely to be victimized themselves due to dysregulated mood and behaviour, better embodying the definition of secondary psychopathy. To a lesser extent, given psychopathic and antisocial traits are observed to a greater degree in incarcerated samples (Eden et al., 2015), there may be more diversity in the current sample as opposed to community samples, where the majority of research examining the relationship between relational aggression and psychopathy subtypes has been conducted. As a result, it is less likely that the current results would depict a homogenous group of psychopathic traits (i.e., primary or secondary).

Taking the above into consideration, it is apparent that psychopathy plays a role in the behaviours of female offenders but also to acts of violence and the perpetration of relational aggression. Integrating the above with what has been discovered about the establishment of social hierarchies via relational aggression in an incarceration setting increases our understanding of the social mechanisms inside female offender facilities. Therefore, the findings described in this document have implications for future research, institutional staff, and clinical teams.

Considerations and Future Directions

The current study employed rigorous methods and provided a thorough investigation into relational aggression and social hierarchy development, antisocial behaviour, and psychopathy in incarcerated female offenders. Although effective in answering the research questions posed

herein, several considerations should be made. The considerations called for are as follows: inclusion of variables such as history of abuse and mental illness, how relational aggression classification procedures may have had on study outcomes, and the influence of the evaluation of relational aggression as it pertains to social standings. Several recommendations for future research studies, beyond those included in-text are also proposed.

Discovered within the current investigation were the ability of self-centered impulsive psychopathic traits to predict violent offending and the ability of relational aggression victimization and callousness to predict relational aggression perpetration. Although the prediction models were significant and accounted for 37% and 39% of the variance, respectively, they leave a lot to be explored in the way of additional variables contributing to the model. Amongst these variables might be alternate forms of victimization (e.g., physical abuse, neglect, sexual assault, etc.), substance abuse, early attachment ruptures and parental maltreatment, youth records, mental health issues, currently or by history, all of which are shown to be strongly related to both relational aggression perpetration and female offending (Galen et al., 2000; Leenaars & Lester, 2011; Murdoch et al., 2012; Van Voohis, 2012).

The current study did not include these variables with the intention of avoiding the portrayal of women as purely victims of their environment (see Miller, 2000). However, now having extracted the negative harmful traits/behaviours, reintegrating the above is called for to provide clarity. Obtaining such data, alongside the proposed descriptive model would further advance our understanding of the mechanisms underlying social hierarchy development in an incarceration setting and allow for claims to be made in a broader sense.

In regard to the impact of relational aggression perpetration classification, there exist no known measures to date that provide direct classifications of whether an individual is in fact “high” in relational aggression perpetration. Therefore, previous researchers, as did this author, utilized intra-sample comparisons to classify individuals as being high, mid-range, or low. As indicated in previous sections, the women may not report, intentionally or unintentionally, the level to which they engage in relationally aggressive behaviours towards peers. As such, lower ratings of engagement may occur, and, if so, the results of statistical analyses might produce false negatives. Low endorsement of behaviour may explain the lack of statistical significance observed across level of relational aggression perpetration in the current sample as it pertains to psychopathic traits.

The final area of consideration is the method through which relational aggression reports were obtained. Despite the use of self-report measures being utilized frequently to determine a participant’s engagement in relational aggression, the preferred method for gathering data pertaining to such is through peer nomination scales (Crick & Grotpeter, 1999). Peer nomination scales ask that individuals within the social group rate the other individuals level of relational aggression perpetration and social standing. Unfortunately, the use of a peer nomination scale was not feasible in the current sample, as they would require all participants, or subsamples of participants to be from the same units and to have sufficient time to establish their current social position. Additionally, it would require all, or most, members of a unit to participate. Future researchers may want to locate units where the women spend a significant portion of their time with the same women to allow for relationship building to occur. Treatment facilities and/or units of lower security classifications may be the ideal custodial setting for such studies.

As the current study proposed a new model for understanding the use of relational aggression to establish social hierarchies, a central goal of future research would be to validate its applicability to a larger sample of female offenders and women in the community. Future studies should test the proposed descriptive model of social hierarchy development in female offenders presented herein by utilizing peer nomination scales, in consultation with institutional staff and clinicians, to determine what, if any, changes should be made and to identify any additional levels or behaviours that may influence the course of the model.

Finally, future studies should explore the applicability of the proposed model to males. Previous research suggests that relationally aggressive behaviours are also present in males (Czar, Dahlen, Bullock, & Nicholson, 2010), particularly once men reach adulthood. Therefore, it is likely that relational aggression, if present to the same extent, may serve a similar purpose as it relates to the establishment of social hierarchies. Identifying which tactics men utilize when they do perpetrate in a relationally aggressive manner would also be of interest.

Clinical and Institutional Implications

Apart from adding significantly to literature on relational aggression, antisocial behaviour, and psychopathy in female offenders, the above study offers valuable information regarding female-specific issues in clinical practice and institutional functioning. The findings described herein inform a gender-responsive model of aggression and treatment of women, as called for by previous correctional researchers (e.g., Bloom, 1999; Covington & Bloom, 2006; Salisbury et al., 2009).

First, the proposed descriptive model of social hierarchy development via relational aggression can be viewed through the lens of Andrews and Bonta's Risk-Needs-Responsivity Model (RNR Model; Andrews & Bonta, 2006) to address female-specific experiences of

aggression and anger, as well as poor social functioning. The RNR model remains the most prominent theoretical framework through which recent treatment programs and offender risk assessment strategies are developed. The “risk” element of the RNR model emphasizes that it is necessary interventions be geared towards the offender’s risk of recidivism. The “need” and “responsivity” elements concern the targeting of the offender’s criminogenic needs and implementation of modifications to programs/interventions based of offender’s level of functioning (e.g., personality, learning style, etc.) to enhance program efficacy.

As well as providing a theoretical framework through which to view and treat criminal behaviour, Andrews and Bonta (2006) identified eight “central” need principles (see Andrews and Bonta, 2006, for full list of criminogenic and non-criminogenic needs). Of the eight principles, social supports for crime (i.e., having criminalized peers and lacking prosocial peers; major risk/need factor), exhibiting facets of an antisocial personality pattern (i.e., aggressive and irritable; major risk/need factor), and self-esteem (i.e., low feelings of self-esteem/self-worth; non-criminogenic minor need) are most pertinent to the current discussion.

The proposed model has the greatest implications for the “needs” and “responsivity” elements of the RNR model. Based on the importance placed on social relationships for female offenders, the integration of the quality of these relationships into a woman’s sense of self, and the negative social and psychological consequences of exposure to relational aggression, it is reasonable to conclude that exposure to relational aggression and use of its associated tactics would negatively impact treatment responsivity and increase risk. Therefore, the findings of the current investigation suggest relational aggression may be a female-specific risk/need area and might uniquely contribute to treatment engagement, responsivity, and, overall risk.

As an example, standard anger management programming is often developed and delivered through the lens of traditionally male forms of aggression focusing on the escalations of feelings of anger to physical altercations. Although these programs remain relatively effective with women, they include minimal information concerning relational aggression, seemingly one of the greatest risks to their well being while incarcerated. Therefore, participants may not reap the full benefits of such programming without its inclusion. If integrated into existing programming, women might respond better to treatment interventions that facilitate insight into their relationally aggressive behaviours, allowing them to label and identify relational aggression as it occurs. Assisting women in the effective communication of anger and the occurrence of boundary violations and relationship ruptures via interpersonal effectiveness strategies (e.g., clearly labeling emotion and indicating needs) may attenuate the use of instrumental proactive and reactive relational aggression toward peers, increase engagement in positive, prosocial relationships with peers, and, ultimately, improving their self-worth and mental health.

Although the descriptive model developed as part of the current investigation speaks highly to the “need” and “responsivity” elements of the RNR model, it also has implications for the “risk” element. The Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R; Andrews & Bonta, 1995) is the gold standard for general risk assessment, utilized in Canadian correctional facilities and by clinicians working with offenders to assess an offender’s level of risk of recidivism. The LSI-R includes items measuring both dynamic (i.e., changeable; e.g., companions) and static (i.e., historical and unchangeable; e.g., criminal history) factors. The LSI-R has also been well validated for evaluating risk in women (Folsom & Atkinson, 2007). One section for evaluation is related to engagement with prosocial versus antisocial peers (i.e., Companions section) and the individual’s relationship quality with family and intimate partners (i.e., Family/Marital section).

Evaluators are instructed, as per the LSI-R User Manual (Andrews & Bonta, 1995) to consider information obtained during clinical interviewing and based on extant file information. An individual will receive a higher risk rating if these relationships are negative, disruptive, or absent. Querying the individual's use of relational aggression as a way to better understand the quality of their platonic relationships would be of added value. Incorporating items and/or interview questions pertaining to relational aggression might allow clinicians and correctional staff to effectively categorize those at risk for violent behaviour and recidivism but also guide treatment interventions. Separate from interventions carried out by clinical staff and general risk assessment, the current study also has implications for institutional staff.

As stated previously, relational aggression is not punishable in an incarceration setting and occurs in front of staff regularly without interruption. More frequently, it is the occurrence of physically aggressive behaviours that appear to elicit negative attention from correctional staff. It is not uncommon, through no fault of their own, for correctional staff to misinterpret relationally aggressive behaviour as benign or fail to notice it all together. Therefore, providing psychoeducation to correctional staff about relational aggression, using the proposed model, would assist correctional staff to identify relationally aggressive behaviours and strategies to help them de-escalate aggressive situations. Previous literature demonstrates that when correctional officers feel empowered and capable of assisting inmates with rehabilitation, conflict resolution, and engaging in successful interactions with inmates, positive outcomes are observed (Toch, 1997). Training in this domain is also likely to promote empathy and the ability to validate the women's experience (Gendell, 2004). Raskauskas and Stoltz (2004) identified intervention strategies proven effective in managing relationally aggressive behaviours and decreasing instances of victimization that could reasonably be carried out in a custodial setting. Their

recommendations include: providing education regarding relational aggression to staff; investigating these behaviours amongst the women on their respective units, meaning it is crucial to know the hierarchies in your institution; promote a safe environment for women to come forward without judgement or accusations of perpetration; and provide sufficient supervision where relational attacks are addressed when observed.

At this time, women cannot be charged under the Criminal Code of Canada for perpetrating relationally aggressive behaviour. However, if these acts are deemed to be frequent, malicious, and particularly disruptive to the unit, correctional and clinical staff could consider applying a Category 2 (minor infraction) institutional misconduct. Loss of privileges (e.g., attendance to recreational activities), mandatory participation in mediation sessions with victims and clinical staff, and/or temporary segregation from peers, if needed, could also be considered as a way of reprimanding relational aggression perpetrators before formal misconduct charges are considered.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the current investigation broadened our understanding of the presence and mechanisms of relational aggression in a correctional setting, while providing valuable information about how antisocial and psychopathic traits manifest in a female offender population. Through the gathering of self-report and interview data, a model emerged depicting the process through which social hierarchies are developed, revealing the extent to which relational aggression exists amongst female offenders. Furthermore, the model revealed how the presence of psychopathic traits assists perpetrators to move toward the apex of their respective units. The obtained results also indicate that it is not the individual's offence behaviour that predicts perpetration, rather their own victimization histories and callous traits. To better

understand violent female offending, one should look to psychopathic traits, namely those depicting a self-centered impulsive individual. Taken together, the findings are significant to clinical practice, the training of institutional staff, and assessment methods in the future.

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Appendix A

Laurentian University Research Ethics Board Approval

**APPROVAL FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS**

Research Ethics Board – Laurentian University

This letter confirms that the research project identified below has successfully passed the ethics review by the Laurentian University Research Ethics Board (REB). Your ethics approval date, other milestone dates, and any special conditions for your project are indicated below.

TYPE OF APPROVAL / New X / Modifications to project / Time extension	
Name of Principal Investigator and school/department	Sarah Mansfield-Green (Psychology) Paul Valliant (Supervisor)
Title of Project	An Investigation of the Role and Application of Relational Aggression in Female Offenders
REB file number	2013-04-05
Date of original approval of project	May 12, 2013
Date of approval of project modifications or extension (if applicable)	
Final/Interim report due on	June 30, 2014
Conditions placed on project	Final report due on June 30, 2014

During the course of your research, no deviations from, or changes to, the protocol, recruitment or consent forms may be initiated without prior written approval from the REB. If you wish to modify your research project, please refer to the Research Ethics website to complete the appropriate [REB form](#).

All projects must submit a report to REB at least once per year. If involvement with human participants continues for longer than one year (e.g. you have not completed the objectives of the study and have not yet terminated contact with the participants, except for feedback of final results to participants), you must request an extension using the appropriate [REB form](#).

In all cases, please ensure that your research complies with [Tri-Council Policy Statement \(TCPS\)](#). Also please quote your REB file number on all future correspondence with the REB office.

Congratulations and best of luck in conducting your research.

Susan James, Chair
Laurentian University Research Ethics Board

Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services Ethics Approval

**Ministry of Community Safety and
Correctional Services**Program Effectiveness, Statistics and
Applied Research UnitStrategic and Operational Initiatives
Branch200 First Avenue West
3rd Floor
North Bay ON P1B 9M3
Telephone (705) 494-3353
Facsimile (705) 494-3420**Ministère de la Sécurité communautaire
et des Services correctionnels**Efficacité des programmes, des statistiques
et de la recherche appliquée

Initiatives stratégiques et opérationnelles

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August 13, 2013

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**RE: Research Proposal - "An investigation of the role and application of
relational aggression in female offenders"**

Dear Ms. Mansfield-Green and Dr. Valliant:

On the recommendation of the Correctional Services Research Committee, I have approved the participation of the Ministry in the research you have proposed.

Please complete the attached *Research Agreement* and return it to:

Ms. Danell Dobson
Program Effectiveness, Statistics and Applied Research Unit
Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services
200 First Avenue W.,
North Bay, ON P1B 9M3

If you require assistance in making arrangements to carry out your research, please contact Dr. David Day, Chair, Correctional Services/Youth Justice Research Committee at (416) 979-5000, extension 7104.

I wish you much success in your research, and look forward to receiving a report of your findings.

Appendix B

SAMPLE RECRUITMENT POSTER

Hi, my name is Sarah Mansfield. I am a Masters student in the Applied Psychology program at Laurentian University. I am here to invite you to participate in a study that will evaluate relationships between females and female aggression. Participation in this study will not interfere with other programs you may be involved in and can be done during your free time. By taking part in this study you may help increase our knowledge about the female offending behaviour and relationships so that programs and policies could be created to better fit offender's needs.

The information gathered in this study may be presented in journal articles and/or presentations but it will be presented in a summarized form. If you choose to participate all your responses will remain anonymous. Only myself, and my supervisor will have access to the completed tests. The interview may be recorded on a tape recorder and typed out by myself. Your answers are private and will not be attached to your names. Your answers will receive a number in place of your name. Therefore, no one will know how you answered the questions.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. If you decided to withdraw or choose not to participate in the study there will be no negative consequences and this will have no impact on your treatment by the staff. If you withdraw from this study any information that you have contributed will be destroyed.

If you would like to volunteer to participate in this study tell me your first and last name and I will contact you in the near future to participate in the study. Thank you. Do you have any questions?

Appendix C

Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a study that will examine the role of relational aggression in female offending behaviour. Please read this form carefully and feel free to ask any questions you might have. The purpose of this consent form is to describe the study to you and to obtain your permission to participate in the study being described.

Student Researcher:	Sarah Mansfield-Green Telephone Number: 1-800-461-4030 Ext: 4239 Email: sx_mansfieldgreen@laurentian.ca Department of Psychology, Laurentian University
Faculty Supervisor:	Dr. Paul Valliant Telephone Number: 1-800-461-4030 Ext: 4249 Email: pvalliant@laurentian.ca Department of Psychology, Laurentian University

Purpose and Procedure: The purpose of this study is to determine how relevant relational aggression is in the lives of female offenders. Relational aggression is a type of anger often used to harm another person through damage to their relationships (i.e., friendship). For example, a woman might get a friend to do a criminal act by threatening to exclude them from the group if they don't. Females act out their anger differently than men. Relational aggression seems to be used often by females. Therefore, we want to investigate how much female offenders use this type of aggression in their relationships and in their offences. We would like to give you 6-7 questionnaires and a short interview that will require approximately 1 ½ to 2 hours to answer. The interview will be recorded on a tape recorder and typed out by the student researcher.

Potential Risk: You should not experience any negative consequences by participating in this study.

Potential Benefits: By taking part in this study, you may help increase our knowledge about the role of relational aggression in female offenders. More specifically, you will help us identify the presence of relational aggression in offenders and what relational aggressive people are like in a correctional setting. The current investigation will help us develop programs (e.g., anger management) that better fit the specific needs of female offenders, while reducing the rate of female offenders entering the criminal justice system.

Right to Withdraw: Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. If you decide to withdraw or choose not to participate in the study there will be no negative consequences and this will have no impact on your treatment by the staff at your correctional institution. If you withdraw from the study, any information that you have contributed will be destroyed.

Confidentiality: Your answers to the questions are private: **DO NOT** put your name or any other identifying information on the questionnaires. Therefore, no one other than the primary researcher will know how you answered the questions. During recruitment you may be identified as a participant if you agree to volunteer in this study. The information gathered from this study may be presented in journal articles and conference presentations. However, all of the responses will be reported in a summarized form in which will **NOT** allow you to be identified. A summary of the results will be provided to your institution upon completion of this project.

Statement of Disclosure: I understand that the information I provide is confidential, and will never be revealed to anyone except under the following circumstances: if I disclose information about plans to harm myself or others, information concerning any unknown emotion, physical, or sexual abuse to children, or information about any other criminal activities not already known to authorities, the researcher is required to report this information to the appropriate authorities.

Storage of Data: If you choose to participate your responses will be held confidential and only the researchers will have access to the completed test, which will be securely stored by the research supervisor at Laurentian University of Sudbury, Ontario upon completion of the study.

Questions: If you have any questions concerning the study, please feel free to ask at any point; you are also free to contact the researchers at the number provided below if you have any questions at a later time.

This project was approved by Laurentian University, Ethics Research Board on May 12, 2013 and by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services Adult Correctional Services Research Committee on _____ 2013. If you have any questions or concerns about this study or your rights as a participant in this study, please contact the program office at your facility. Your program office will put you in contact with Sarah Mansfield-Green (student researcher) via telephone at 1-800-461-4030 ext: 4239. Program officers can also contact the Primary Investigator by e-mail at sx_mansfieldgreen@laurentian.ca. If you have any questions about the conduct or professionalism of the study, please contact, Robin Craig, Laurentian University Research Office, at 1-800-461-4030 ext: 3213. You may request results of this study by contacting your program officer. Your program officer will put you in contact with the student researcher at the e-mail address or telephone number above if you would like the results of the study.

Consent to Participate: I have read and understood the description provided above. I have been provided with an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered satisfactorily. I consent that the primary researcher can utilize my data in their study. I consent to participate in the study described above, understanding that I may withdraw this consent at any time. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for my records. **If what we have discussed today has brought up some unpleasant emotions and you would like to talk to someone, please contact your mental health support staff at your facility.**

Signature of Participant/Researcher

Date: _____

Appendix D

Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Female Offenders

1. Do you feel like you belong to a group in this institution and/or on the outside? How important is this to you? (What is your contribution to this group?)
2. Describe what your friends are like (How you know them, what kind of people are they, how often do you hang out with them)?
3. What does a “friendship” typically look like between women?
4. How do women behave when they are angry with their friends?
5. Why do you think women act in the ways you have discussed?
6. Do you think there are benefits to treating others in their manner? If so, what do you think those benefits are? If not, why?
7. How often are you apart of the situations you have described?
8. How often do you see these kinds of things happen?
Prompt: Institution? Outside?
9. How would you define anger? Aggression?
10. What do you do when someone makes you angry?
11. What do you do when you want to be mean to someone?
12. What would prompt you to act this way toward someone?
13. Can you describe an experience where there has been a conflict between another woman and yourself?
14. Do you think you have used these behaviours (insert what participant has described) in your criminal activity?
15. Have you ever used your relationships to “get away” with something that could be considered criminal? You do not have to tell me your exact offence, just how you used your relationship with the individual to change your situation.
16. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about? Do you have any questions?